SPIRITUALISM AND THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY

SPIRITUALISM AND THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY

AN EXPLANATION OF SPIRITUALIST PHENOMENA AND BELIEFS IN TERMS OF MODERN KNOWLEDGE

BY

MILLAIS CULPIN

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

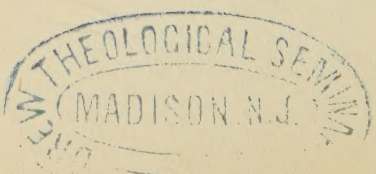
BY

PROFESSOR LEONARD HILL

NEW YORK
LONGMANS, GREEN & CO.
LONDON: EDWARD ARNOLD
1920

[*All rights reserved*]

133.9
C968s



2 Jo 21

134

PREFACE

MY object in writing this book is to present an explanation of so-called occult phenomena concerning which credulity is still as busy as in the days of witchcraft. The producers of these phenomena have been exposed efficiently and often, but their supporters are as active as ever, and show a simple faith which is more convincing than any argument. Moreover, the producers themselves—mediums, clairvoyants, water-diviners, seers, or whatever they may be—are sometimes of such apparent honesty and simplicity that disbelief seems almost a sacrilege; therefore part of my aim is to show how a man believing firmly in his own honesty may yet practise elaborate trickery and deceit.

As the book is intended for readers presumably unacquainted with the trend of modern psychology, it is necessary to point out how much of the opinions set forth are accepted by workers at the subject.

The theory of dissociation has, as far as I know, no opponents. It was applied by Pierre Janet to hysteria and water-divining, thought-reading, etc., all of which he regarded as psychologically identical.[1]

The theory of the unconscious, which we owe to Freud, of Vienna, is still strongly opposed, and the influence, or even the existence, of repres-

[1] See *L'Automatisme Psychologique.* Alcan; Paris.

132605

sions is disputed by those who have not looked for them, undoubted cases of loss of memory being regarded as something of quite different nature. A growing number of workers, however, both here and in America, appreciate the importance of these contributions to psychology.

The possible development of the hysteric from the malingerer by the repression of the knowledge of deceit is an idea of my own, which is not accepted by any one of importance.

These explanations are necessary in fairness to the reader, but I regard appeals to authority on matters of opinion as pernicious, and try to present my opinions in such a way as to allow them to be judged on their merits.

Nevertheless, since I take for granted that supernatural phenomena are not what their producers would have us believe, and at the same time make no general attempt to prove their human origin, I must refer the reader to books on the subject, viz., *Studies in Psychical Research*, by the late Frank Podmore, which treats the spiritualists sympathetically and weakens occasionally in its unbelief ; *Spiritualism and Sir Oliver Lodge*, by Dr. Charles Mercier, which is a direct and vigorous attack upon them ; and *The Question*, by Edward Clodd, a book dealing with the subject historically from primitive man to ' Feda '. Stuart Cumberland, in *Spiritualism—the Inside Truth*, records some of the results of his vain search for spiritist phenomena that will bear investigation ; and in *The Road to Endor* the authors relate the story of a deliberate fraud that was accepted by their friends as a genuine manifestation.

M. C.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
	PREFACE	iii
	INTRODUCTION	vii
CHAPTER		
I.	THE UNCONSCIOUS	1
II.	COMPLEXES	9
III.	FORGETTING AND REPRESSION	16
IV.	DISSOCIATION	24
V.	WATER-DIVINING	34
VI.	SUGGESTION	44
VII.	HYPNOTISM	59
VIII.	DREAMS	66
IX.	HYSTERIA	74
X.	EXPERIMENTS, DOMESTIC AND OTHER	91
XI.	ABOUT MEDIUMS	101
XII.	THE ACCOUNTS OF BELIEVERS	112
XIII.	THE EVOLUTION OF THE MEDIUM	132
	CONCLUSION	155

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/spiritualismnewp0000unse

INTRODUCTION

By PROFESSOR LEONARD HILL, F.R.S.

THE body of man is made up of an infinite number of cells—minute masses of living substance—grouped into organs subserving particular functions, and held together by skeletal structures, bones and containing membranes such as the horny layer of the skin which are formed by the living cells. The whole is comparable to citizens grouped in farms and factories subserving one or other function necessary for the commonweal ; and just as the city has its transport connecting the whole, distributing food and the various products of the factories, a drainage and scavenger system taking away the waste material, and a telephone system through which operations can be ordered and co-ordinated according to the needs of the commonweal, so has the body its blood circulation, digestive and excretive systems, and a co-ordinating nervous system. How small are the cells, how infinite their number is shown by the fact that each drop of blood the size of a pin's head contains five million red corpuscles ; there are five or six pints of blood in the body !

The living substance, e.g. of a nerve cell, appears as a watery substance crowded with a countless number of granules, which are so small that only the light dispersed around each is visible under the highest power of the microscope when illuminated

by a beam of light against a dark ground, just as the halo of each dust particle in the air is made visible by a beam of light crossing a dark room, and just as these dust particles are in dancing motion due to the currents of air, so are the particles in the living substance ceaselessly kept dancing by the play of inter-molecular forces. From the dead substance of the cells the chemist extracts various complex colloidal substances, e.g. proteins, fats, carbohydrates, and various salts, and these in their turn he can resolve into chemical elements. The interplay of energy between the multitude of electrically charged granules inside the cell, and the environment outside keeps up the dance of life, the radiant energy of the sun, and the atomic energy of the elements being the ultimate source of the energy transmutations exhibited by both living and non-living matter.

In the living cell there is an interplay of the energy of masses of molecules forming the granules, of single molecules in watery solution, of atoms which compose the molecules, and of electrons, the various groupings of which compose the atoms of the elements. The elements themselves are now recognised to be transmutable through simplification and rearrangement of their electronic structure, and to be evolved out of one primordial electronic unit, a unit of energy, unknowable in nature, out of the groupings and transmutations of which arise all manner of living and non-living forms, the apparently indestructible stable materials being no less in a state of flux and evolution than the most unstable. The complexity of the transmutations of energy and ultimate unknowableness and mystery of their cause are no less in the case of a drop of water or a particle of dirt than in that of a living cell. The scientific

conception of the universe, the very opposite of materialism, approaches pantheism.

The living substance of a uni-cellular organism, similarly the congery of cells forming the body of man, has evolved the power of sensing and of moving towards, or away from life-giving or destroying sources of energy. Special sense-organs, receptive of one or other form of energy have been evolved through the æons of the struggle for existence, together with nervous and muscular systems, to enable him to preserve his life in the midst of the shocks and thrills of his environment. There are also evolved inner senses, and a sympathetic nervous system which knits all parts of the body in harmonious action; the community of action also being brought about by the circulating fluids of the body, the blood and the lymph, to which each living cell gives and from which each cell takes. For communion with the environment, eyes for visual, and sense organs in the skin for thermal radiant energy have been perfected, ears for sound waves travelling through air, taste organs for substances in solution, smell organs for particles of substances floating in the atmosphere, touch organs for sensing movements of masses.

The receptive cells of the special sense organs are composed of watery, granular, living substance and elaborate mechanisms have been evolved for converting one or other form of energy into such a form that it can be received by the living substance, e.g. the intricate structure of the eye with its focussing lenses, retinal cells laden with pigment sensitive to light, the ear with its drum membrane vibrating in unison with sound waves in the air, its chain of transmitting osicles, and complicated receiving organ placed in the spiral turns of the cochlea. Be it noted, the receptive cells of the sense organs are immersed

in fluid, and each sense organ is specifically sensitive, i.e. only to that form of energy which it has been evolved to receive through countless ages of evolution.

The nervous system is composed of myriads of nerve cells, and of nervous fibres, which are long and exceedingly slender processes of these cells formed of similar substance, each shielded and insulated by a double coat. The nerve cells and the nerves are arranged in an ordered plan which has been unravelled by ingenious methods. They connect all parts of the body one with another. Think of the whole telephone system of Britain linked up together with millions of receivers, thousands of local exchanges, hundreds of central exchanges, etc., the nervous system with its sense organs, sensory nerves, lower and higher nerve centres and motor nerves, is infinitely more intricate than that. The whole forms an interlacing feltwork formed of watery nerve cells and processes, and not only receives sensory stimuli and transmits them as motor impulses, but is more or less permanently *modified* by each sensory thrill which enters it, memorising each, more or less, for longer or shorter time according to its character or intensity. Thus the response of the nervous system to sensory excitation changes with education, habits form and character develops from birth to manhood, to decay again from manhood to old age, ceaselessly changing, but becoming graved on a certain plan. The making thereof depends on inborn qualities of the living substance—the conjugate product of the male and female parents, this moulded by environmental conditions, both in utero and after birth, by food, and the ceaseless instreaming of sensations. Depending on the nutrition of the cortex of the great brain, abrogated by narcotics, absent in sleep, consciousness of our being flickers from moment to

moment, the product of the instreaming of sensations from the outer world and from our own body, and of memories of past sensations, aroused, by some present sensation. Conscious judgement arises from the balancing of present sensations with memorised sensations and leads to purposeful actions.

Beneath the conscious world an infinite host of functions are carried out unconsciously, functions depending on the nervous connection of one part with another, just as the common people carry out a host of actions through the telephone system without the cognisance of the government which is seated at the highest central exchange.

To find food, satisfy the sexual instinct, escape enemies, gain shelter from excessive physical changes of environment, the special senses and nervous system have then been evolved and perfected in the intricacy of their mechanism through vast æons of evolution. There is evidence that man has for some million years trod the earth ; but the senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch were evolved in the vast procession of lower animals which preceded him for those millions of years which reach back and ever back to the first generation of life.

The realisation of these facts saves the physiologist from being deceived, either by fraudulent tricks or those natural chances of human occurrence which occasion the belief of the credulous in telepathy. He recognises that the human nervous system is built on a common plan, and that it is to be expected that the sensory stimuli received from a given environmental condition will often arouse the same train of thought in two or more people, standing together, especially in those who habitually associate. Such coincidences of thought, which astonish the ignorant, are due to natural law. Human experi-

ence shows that judgements of fundamental importance which would, if transmittable to another at a distance by telepathy, win a fortune, save a defeat, etc., are never so transmitted. The Stock Exchange and the army in the field must have their telephone and telegraph systems and messengers. No more concentrated will to send information, which might bring succour, say from the artillery, could be given than by men in peril of their lives in the trenches, when the enemy came swarming over the top, but we know that with the wires cut and the human messengers killed no succour came. Neither does it come to the liner which, in full proud course with its freight of thousands of souls strikes an iceberg, unless the wireless mechanism be installed and operated so that the S.O.S. signal is despatched. Otherwise it sinks without trace, as the Germans advised their 'U' boats to let their victim merchant ships sink.

The phenomena of wireless telegraphy and of radio-active elements have led people to think that some direct means of communication of energy from one brain to another may be possible, that is without intervention of the special senses. There is not the least evidence in favour of this view; the evolution of the senses is wholly against it. It is true that all vital activity is accompanied by electrical change —by a flow of electrons—in the living matter, the nervous impulse itself may be so transmitted. Such electrical change by a special evolution of structure is magnified in the electric organ of certain fishes and used by them as a weapon of offence. It is then sensed just as an electric shock from a battery is sensed, and the intensity of the shock lessens inversely as the square of the distance. There is no evidence that the minute electrical changes accompanying nervous action in man are transmittable to a distance

through space; the nerves are evolved to confine and convey these as nerve impulses to suitable receivers within their body whereby function is co-ordinated.

A radio-active element enters into the composition of the living matter, e.g. potassium. A nutritive fluid can be prepared from a watery solution of sodium calcium and potassium salts capable of keeping the excised heart of the frog in action. The place of potassium in this fluid can be taken by the energy radiated from radio-active material placed suitably near the weak solution of the other two salts which contains the heart. Too strong a radiation kills the heart. Wonderful as this new discovery is it is comparable with the well-known fact that the radiant energy of the sun—either heat rays or the cold ultra-violet rays of intense chemical action—while beneficent, when properly graded, kill the living substance which is over-exposed to them. Hence the evolution of the green colour of plants and the pigment in the skin of animals, which acts as screens.

It has recently been shown that trees pick up the long waves used in wireless telegraphy, and can be used as receivers, but there is no evidence that animals are sensitive to these waves. No one knew either of their existence or of that of magnetic storms until instruments were invented suitably tuned to pick up the waves of energy and demonstrate them to one or other of man's special senses—sight, hearing or touch.

Every invention of science goes to prove that knowledge enters only through the avenue of the senses, which are tuned to the receipt of certain forms of energy. Other forms of energy to which the senses are not tuned must be converted by instrumental means into a form of energy which can be sensed.

Contrary then to scientific evidence is the supposition that waves of energy proceed directly through

space from the watery granular living substance of one brain, confined within skull and skin, and passes into the similar substance of another. If any such direct transmission and reception of energy were possible why were æons spent in the evolution of sense organs, and why is the labour of men spent in perfecting the means of communication of his thoughts by observation of the movements of expression, by speech, writing, semaphore, heliograph, telegraph and telephone and by waves of energy sent through wires or wireless space?

In *The Road to Endor*, we read how two clever officers, E. H. Jones and C. W. Hill, giving the whole time of a tedious captivity to evolving tricks of the business, successfully fooled a hundred of their fellow-officer prisoners, men of intelligence and education, into belief in telepathy. In the appendix of their book there is given a portion of their telepathy code to show the sort of system which may be worked, a code which allowed the communication of the names of hundreds of common articles, numbers, the names of all the officers in the camp, etc. They could use the code with, or without speaking; perfection in its use, the authors say, involved a good deal of memory work and constant practice. 'Nothing but the blankness of our days, and the necessity of keeping our minds from rusting could have excused the waste of time entailed by preparation for a thought-reading exhibition. It is hardly a fitting occupation for free men.' What these officers could do obviously the professional conjurer can do, no less the humbug and quack who swindles money out of the credulous and superstitious. Let no one give credence to telepathy till he or she has read this most amusing and educative book. The authors no less humbugged the camp by planchette writing whereby they trans-

mitted messages supposed to come from disembodied spirits. They fooled not only their fellow-prisoners with these spirit messages, but the Turkish interpreter and Commandant of the camp, gaining thereby important concessions. They planned a daring method of escape which depended on exciting the cupidity of the Commandant and on a hunt for buried treasure, occupying many months of preparation, and only failing at the last through the unwitting interference of a brother officer. Some of their 'spirit' messages were actually transmitted through the Commandant to the War Office in Constantinople, so implicit became his obedience. What these two officers affected is unequalled by anything in Sir Oliver Lodge's evidence as set forth in *Raymond*. They give details of how they used chance remarks and trivial facts heard and memorised months beforehand, and of how they observed and were guided by the slightest variation in tone of answer or movement of their victims, which expressed interest and excitement or the reverse, and so built up a story of some past action which clinched belief. The hits were striking and memorised, and the misses unnoticed, forgotten—for such is the tendency of the human mind. Such are the methods of the professional medium, and in *The Road to Endor* they lie unravelled and fully exposed.

The physiologist recognises the tendency of those with unstable, nervous temperaments—e.g. hysterical girls—to gain interest and cause excitement at any cost of trouble in developing methods of deceit. Hence the ghostly visitations of houses, the mysterious bell-ringings, rappings, spillings of water, etc. I, myself, have personally come across and investigated two of these cases—one of a young, educated woman who played pranks on the house of her hosts, pouring water into their beds, etc.; the other of a servant-maid

who caused the disappearance of meat from the larder, and dirtying the cat's feet made it make foot-marks on a perpendicular wall leading to the larder window, who spirited away the gardener's firewood and wrote mysterious letters in a feigned hand, the imprint of which were found in her blotting-book, and who reported she saw a mysterious woman prowling round the house.

The few eminent scientists who have expressed their belief in spiritualism are mostly physicists, e.g. Crookes, Oliver Lodge and W. Barrett—men who have not made a life-study of physiology and nervous disorders, who are not familiar with the attainments and methods of conjurers and professional impostors, and are shielded in their laboratories and home life from close acquaintance with human deceit and cunning. Their familiarity with the transmission of waves of energy in dead material, and through space leads them to concepts which cannot justly be applied to living beings. To the physiologist, who recognises the majestic unity of natural phenomena, belief in telepathy and spiritualism appear a form of materialism as gross as the ju-ju superstition of the Benin native.

Nothing can excite greater contempt than the mean trivialities which are served as communications from that infinite, silent universe wherein the energy of individual life sinks on death.

The belief in spiritualism works grave harm on ignorant, credulous people of nervous temperament, and fills the pockets of rascally impostors. Its practice should then be as sternly suppressed by the law as any other fraud and imposture. Dr. Culpin, in his valuable and thoughtful treatment of this subject, shows, *inter alia*, how the medium requires no less to be protected from deception and ruin of his own soul than does his dupe.

SPIRITUALISM AND THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY

CHAPTER I

THE UNCONSCIOUS

FROM the moment of waking till we fall asleep again our thoughts are busy, one thought following another all day long without a break and each being in some way related to the preceding one. Memories come up into the stream, the outer world is constantly affecting it through our senses, and we tend to think that all our mind-work is done in this ' stream of consciousness '.

But beneath our stream of consciousness lies a deep sea of memories, feelings, and directive influences. All our previous experience is buried there, and no man knows how much he knows. Every one has experienced the sudden recollections which come up unsought when a sight, a sound, or a scent makes association with something long past and apparently forgotten ; and not only our memories of things, places, and people, but our past mental processes themselves lie in this deep sea of the *unconscious*, to help or hinder us in the present or future.

I speak of the unconscious, though there are objections to the use of the word, which may lead to such a contradiction of terms as 'unconscious knowledge'. It is much more than a storehouse of memories: it is the seat of mental processes which take place unknown to us and are revealed at times in strange and unexpected ways. It comes into contact with the stream of consciousness, and, as we so often find in attempting to classify natural phenomena, there are no well-marked lines of demarcation between one and the other, though the extremes are definite enough.

The unconscious is not always a willing servant and often refuses to obey the wishes of its owner. Every one has at some time vainly tried to recall a name which is 'on the tip of the tongue', and one name after another is tried till perhaps the right one comes up and leaves us wondering where the difficulty was. There is, according to the teaching of some psychologists, always a reason for this failure to remember, though even an apparently ordinary example may need a skilful analysis to show how the failure arose and why the other names presented themselves. Slips of the tongue are likewise dependent upon unconscious influences, and, although I was once sceptical, a few examinations of my own slips have convinced me of the truth of this little theory. Here is an example of one of them, such as occurs often enough and would ordinarily be passed over without further examination:—

Sitting one evening with friends who were inter-

ested in this subject, I read aloud a paragraph from the book I was reading, and was asked the name of the author. My answer, after a slight pause, was ' Robert Brown ' ; it was immediately corrected by one of my friends, who pointed out that the author was Robert Smith (the names are fictitious), and called upon me for an explanation of the mistake. The first question was, ' Who is Brown ? ' and the only Brown I knew was a man concerning whom I had a few days before received a letter with information about him which led me to regard him with strong dislike. The next point was that we had been recently discussing the private life of Robert Smith, and I had manifested dislike towards his actions. Then I remembered that when I was asked the name of the author there had flashed into my consciousness the feeling that he was not precisely the sort of man I liked. Although the rest of the chain of thought was unknown to me at the time, yet it became plain, under my friends' cross-examination, that this feeling of dislike had called up the name of the other victim of my displeasure, though questions from my friends were necessary before I could remember to whom the other name referred.

The last point is quite characteristic, for there seems to be a definite resistance in the mind of the perpetrator of the slip against piecing together his thought processes, and the aid of some one else is necessary to enable, or force him, to do it ; then he feels compelled to acknowledge the hidden thoughts. The difficulty in recognising

and admitting the cause of such slips is due to their being so often the expression of feelings which the owner does not like to publish to the world or perhaps even acknowledge to himself.

But the unconscious is not always, or even often, such a useless intruder upon our every-day life. It economises our energies, and often takes us by short cuts to ends which would otherwise need continued reasoning. 'Intuition' is the product of previous experience, and rises into the consciousness as a finished judgement without the owner of the gift being aware of the factors concerned in its formation. One kind of intuition is improperly called in my profession 'clinical instinct', but, unlike instinct, it is a result of training and experience, and is never seen without them. Here is an example which came under my notice: An ophthalmic house-surgeon, busy with new patients, sees a man aged about thirty-five, who complains of failing sight, and without further investigation he writes on the man's book, 'Tobacco amblyopia?' and sends him in to his chief. Later on his chief asks him, 'How did you spot this case?' and the house-surgeon answers, 'I don't know, but he looked like it'. The chief agrees that there is something which can be seen but not described in the looks of a sufferer from this complaint. Now this house-surgeon, though keen on his work, had seen only a few cases of that disease, and I do not now accept his explanation of how he 'spotted' it. A man of thirty-five may find

his sight failing from various causes, but the common ones are not many. If the cause had been 'long-sight', he would have complained that he could not see to read; certain general diseases causing loss of sight at that age would perhaps have visible symptoms; the man was too young for cataract, and his eyes looked healthy. In short, tobacco amblyopia was a reasonable guess, and, when we remember that the disease is caused by smoking strong pipe tobacco, and that the man who smokes that tobacco generally smells of it, it is fair to suppose that it was not the evidence of his eyes alone that guided the house-surgeon in his guess, though he was not conscious of any train of reasoning nor was he aware of the smell of stale tobacco.

This suggests that a stimulus may act upon our thoughts without our being conscious of the origin of the feeling produced, and this is what happens in connection with that well-known sensation, felt on visiting a new place, that one has been there before. If a close examination is made it will be found that there is really something—a picture, a scent, or even so slight a stimulus as a puff of warm air—which has stirred a memory in the unconscious; this memory fails to reach the consciousness in its entirety, or it would immediately be recognised as caused by the particular stimulus, but in its incomplete form it appears as a memory of nothing in particular. Such a memory being inconceivable it is at once joined on to the whole scene, and one feels 'I've

surely been here before'. This feeling may be regarded as an intuition in its most useless and incomplete form, but its theoretical importance will be seen later.

Women exercise intuition more than do men, and up to a point this gives them an advantage, though it may annoy the male who prefers to find his reasons on the surface and call them logical.

> 'The reason why I cannot tell,
> But this I know and know full well,
> I do not like thee, Dr. Fell',

is a perfect example of intuition, and a full analysis of the unconscious of the poet would undoubtedly recall a wealth of reasons why. Still, intuition is likely to be a fallible guide, and the man who wishes to avoid trouble with his personal dislikes must always be prepared to check it by whatever conscious knowledge and reasoning power he may possess. The lines quoted above would be a poor defence against a charge of assault.

The person who is guided by intuition in some accustomed situation may be incapable of understanding why another person has not that power. I saw an example of this when I was making a short journey in the North Queensland bush with a white boy who had been reared in that district, but was a stranger to the particular locality in which we then were. It was a rainy day, and we were bound for a place which could be reached by following a stream down to the main river and then travelling up the latter, and this route

I proposed to take. My companion showed astonishment at this, and said, pointing as it were along the other side of the triangle, 'But that's the way.' I agreed, but told him that I couldn't find the way and should get 'bushed' if I tried. He could not understand, but we set off for a ride of some nine to ten miles through fairly dense timber with the boy as guide. In vain I asked him how he kept his course; in similar circumstances I should have marked a tree as far ahead as possible and ridden towards it, marking another before I reached the first, and so on. All he could say was, 'That's the way', and I puzzled him by my questions more than he puzzled me by his ability to go straight to our destination.

The sense of direction is of course well known amongst animals, and I have often in my bush-days confidently trusted my horse to take me to his and my home on the darkest of nights. Although one talks of the 'sense of direction', there is no need to assume anything more than ordinary sense perceptions interpreted by the unconscious workings of the mind. The man who is over-anxious about his capabilities cannot allow his unconscious to take charge of his thoughts in this way. I was always afraid of being lost in the bush and always preoccupied with the need for carefully watching my course; therefore, although I could find my way, I never developed a 'sense of direction'.

To sum up, the unconscious is a collection of mental processes, memories, desires, and influences

of infinite variety which are not always or even often perceived as such by our conscious mind, but the presence of which may and does influence our thoughts and actions. By its aid we obtain results the factors of which are unknown to us, and of which we fail to recognise the origin, and in it is stored not only what we remember but also what we forget. It is in relation to our stream of consciousness and normally blends with it, but the more independently we can allow it to operate the more surely does it reach its end in certain cases.

I must add that Freud introduces a *foreconscious* to indicate the mind-contents which are accessible to the consciousness, but are not of it, but for the sake of simplicity I have avoided the use of that word. The reader must bear in mind that such terms are used to describe not phenomena, but conceptions. Newspapers, the voices of men in the train or the street, marks on ballot-papers, are all phenomena, but ' public opinion ' is only a conception useful to facilitate the expression of ideas. If one asks, ' Where is this unconscious and what does it look like ? ', I can only answer by asking, ' Where is this " public opinion " and what does it look like ? '

The same caution is necessary in regard to other phrases. The stream of consciousness and dissociation are conceptions only, and are not intended to indicate the existence of things having relation to each other in space ; the words are used as convenient means to sum up processes which I hope to show really take place.

CHAPTER II

COMPLEXES

EVERY man likes to think that his creed, religious, political, or social, is founded upon reason; but let the reader consider the beliefs of his acquaintances and he will soon realise that they depend far more upon early training, social position, and the general influence of surroundings than upon any reasoning process. After this exercise let him turn his critical powers upon his own beliefs and examine closely how far they are dependent upon reason or upon influences which he has not recognised before.

Who can say that, in the days when Home-Rulers and anti-Home-Rulers abounded, the average voter was swayed by a reasoned knowledge of the subject? Yet he was quite sure that his side was right and the other wrong, and found it hard to understand how any sane man could own the opinions the other fellows held. Let us picture two neighbours of opposite political beliefs:—if they are both keen gardeners they may exchange views about methods and manures, and in case of difference of opinion one will possibly convince the other by argument. On other matters, too, they will mutually be open to con-

viction. If one favours Ilfracombe for a holiday and the other swears by Torquay, the latter may decide to try Ilfracombe for a change. But let them discuss Home Rule till the crack of doom and neither will convince the other by any process of reasoning; yet each will believe firmly that his opinions are the results of reason, finding an infinity of argument to support them.

Or let anyone start a discussion on a so-called moral question, such as polygamy. He will arouse the warmest expressions of opinion that polygamy is sinful, absurd, and unworkable, and may point in vain to such countries as China, where it apparently works with no more trouble than occurs with our system. Reasons will be showered on him, but scarcely anyone will admit that he objects to polygamy because he has been taught to regard monogamy as the only proper state of marriage.

A man, honestly believing that he is always actuated by certain moral principles, may do things which others regard as opposed to those principles, and if approached on the subject will be greatly annoyed and produce a chain of argument to justify his actions.

Scarcely any of us are free from these failings; certain beliefs we keep stored away, allowing nothing to interfere with them. They are placed in logic-tight compartments and carefully guarded by a pseudo-reasoning which satisfies our desire for logical explanation.

To this pseudo-reasoning is given the name of 'rationalisation', and, lest anyone may be

offended by finding the same term applied to the process by which lunatics defend their delusions, I will add that there is no dividing line between health and disease, and the modes of thought of the insane are not so very different from those of the ordinary man.

To return now to the subject of 'logic-tight compartments'. Each contains a collection of ideas which are treated by the owner in a special way, cherished and guarded carefully from those forces which may cause modification. At the same time he will probably refuse to admit that they influence his consideration of certain questions related to them. The more logic-tight the compartment is, the more warmly does its owner defend it; but where plain reasoning is concerned few men can be roused to enthusiasm. Even though there may be people who regard the reasonings of Euclid as purely appeals to the emotions, what mathematician could grow excited about a man who denied the truth of the Fifth Proposition? But to run counter to a man's political or social beliefs is a sure way to raise the controversial temperature.

As will be easily seen, rationalisation is of everyday occurrence with all of us, and the man who rationalises always believes he is reasoning.

Consider now the business rogue who makes a success of his roguery and then launches out as a philanthropist, still continuing his roguery as a permanent side-line. Such cases are not unknown, and the man seems able to carry on without any

sense of conflict between his two activities. Or consider those not uncommon instances where a man prominent in religious work is detected in some financial crime ; it is usual to regard him as a hypocrite who has used religion as a cloak, but it is equally probable that he was honestly religious, that his earliest steps into crime were reconciled to his principles by rationalisations, and, as he advanced, a logic-tight compartment was built up to prevent conflict between his wrong-doing and his self-respect.

In these examples we have a part of the stream which comes into contact with the main stream of consciousness only by means of a process of rationalisation which allows the two to exist without great mental conflict, but this will never be admitted by the owner, though other people may be acutely conscious of it.

Here, to simplify explanation, I must introduce the word *complex* as used to indicate a system of ideas having a common centre,[1] whether the system is present in the consciousness or exists only in the unconscious.

Our ideas of morality, religion, or politics form complexes, as do our desires and disappointments. An ardent photographer or naturalist is possessed of a complex concerning his hobby, and this complex tends to turn his thoughts in the corresponding

[1] The word ' complex ' was originally used by Freud only in regard to ideas existing in the unconscious, but the way in which I use it is convenient and follows the custom of some English writers.

direction. If a keen botanist and an equally keen amateur photographer are travelling by train each views the scenery according to his complex: the one might note the trees and plants, their flowering or bursting into leaf, and how they vary with the soil, and might speculate as to what finds a closer view might produce; the other sees the same objects, but is busy composing pictures, thinking out distances and exposures, or differences of light and shade.

The man with 'a bee in his bonnet' gives an example of a single powerful complex; but all our thinking is a matter of complexes except on those rare occasions when logic alone is concerned, such as the consideration of a problem of mathematics. Scientific men are prone to believe that their mind-work is purely logical; so it is, up to a certain point, and the more exact the science the less room there is for thinking in complexes; but the reception of a new theory is always opposed by those whose firmly established complexes are offended by it. The aim of scientific training is to eliminate complex thinking and substitute logic, and in the exact sciences this is practically attained; but as soon as the trained man forsakes his laboratory or workshop methods he is at the mercy of his complexes and becomes the ordinary rationalising human being.

There is a great difference between a complex, such as photography, of which the influence is recognised and admitted by its owner, and another, such as a political one, where the

influence is strongly denied. The latter is kept in a logic-tight compartment and reconciled to the reason by rationalisations.

Instincts have their abode in the unconscious and differ from acquired influences in being inborn and common to the race. It is difficult to determine what emotions and desires are truly inborn, as Benjamin Kidd shows in a valuable personal observation.[1]

He found a wild duck's nest as the young birds had just emerged from the egg, the mother-bird flying off at his approach. He took the young birds out of the nest and they showed no fear, nestling from time to time on his feet. Then he moved away and saw the mother-bird return with 'the great terror of man' upon her; next he approached the group again, but the mother-bird flew away with warning quacks and the little ones scattered to cover. He found one of them, but it was now 'a wild transformed creature trembling in panic which could not be subdued'.

McDougall, whose work on Instinct holds high rank, places 'flight' with its emotion of 'fear' among the primary instincts. The apperception of danger is necessary in order to call up this instinct, and Kidd shows that when once the fear of danger from man is planted in the young birds it becomes integrated with the instinct and inseparable from it. Acquired tendencies associated with emotion can therefore share the strength of instincts (the application of this fact is the theme

[1] *The Science of Power*, p. 284. Methuen & Co., 1918.

of Mr. Kidd's book), and we accordingly find the results of early training accepted by the consciousness as perfect and unquestionable. This same characteristic applies, in a modified degree, to all complex thinking. Carry on an argument with an intelligent man on any complex-governed subject, and he will nearly always come down to the bed-rock foundation that he believes his view to be right because he *feels it.* Then you may cease the discussion.

It is by this reasoning that we can understand the attributes of the German mind. The German had certain complexes concerning the Right of Might so built into his unconscious that he gave them the obedience that is demanded by an instinct, and nothing short of national disaster could induce him to relinquish them.

CHAPTER III

FORGETTING AND REPRESSION

HOW we remember is an old and unsolved question, but few people think of asking how we forget : and yet one problem is as important as the other. I cannot answer either except by putting a new one, which is, ' Do we ever forget ? '

If we specify the factors concerned in memory and say that it depends upon impression, retention, and recall, then what do we mean by ' forgetting ' ? If an event makes no impression upon the mind there is neither remembering nor forgetting ; if there is retention of a memory, but one cannot recall it, it is nevertheless stored in the mind and may yet be revived by some association. So that the only certain factor in forgetting is the loss of power of recall, for what is apparently quite forgotten may still be retained in the unconscious.

Can we voluntarily forget ? If by that is meant, ' Can we voluntarily lose the power of voluntary recall ? ' I must, strange as it seems at first sight, assert that we can, though I make the proviso that ' voluntarily ' is a word with a very elastic meaning, and one whose definition would

open up the never-ended argument about Free-will. I will take refuge in a quotation [1] :—

'We ought not to assume that a clear and full anticipation or idea of the end is an essential condition of purposive action, and we have no warrant for setting up the instances in which anticipation is least incomplete as alone conforming to the purposive type, and for setting apart all instances in which anticipation is less full and definite as of a radically different nature.'

Expressing this idea in the terms employed in the previous chapters, we can picture an action as being produced by motives in consciousness, and these motives as being influenced to a greater or less extent by the instincts, emotions, and desires of the unconscious. Every action is influenced by the unconscious, however voluntary it may appear. The young man who seeks the society of a maiden may think he is acting voluntarily and with full consciousness of the end in view, but the end is often visualised by the friends of the pair before the young man realises where his instincts and emotions have led him.

The man who resolutely refuses to think of an unpleasant experience and shuts off the thought of it whenever it rises into his consciousness may not have the intention of placing it beyond reach of voluntary recall, but he may succeed in so doing, and the process by which the end was reached was voluntary. That we have this power is shown by the investigation of war-strained soldiers of the type said to be suffering from

[1] McDougall, *Social Psychology*, p. 359.

'shell-shock'. These men are often stout fellows who have fought long and bravely, and whose condition is a result of the emotions they have suffered rather than of any particular shell explosion. Their typical symptoms are depression, dreams of battle horrors, tremors and stammerings, and strange fears without apparent cause.

In an ordinary case there is great difficulty in persuading the man to talk about his war experiences: he says plainly that he doesn't want to talk about them, or may persistently avoid the subject, or he gives a poor account and shows difficulty in recall, or he claims to have forgotten and requires stimulating in order to remember, or he may have an absolute blank in his memory for certain periods.

Here we see all grades of the result of trying to forget, and the more successful the result the more difficult is the cure; for though the memories are repressed their associated emotions cannot be so dealt with, but remain in consciousness exaggerated and distorted. The dependence of an emotion upon a repressed memory prevents the sufferer from knowing its cause, and the sufferer from an apparently causeless emotion is to be pitied, for he can see no end to his trouble.

A man who was afraid of walking in the dark for fear of falling into holes which he knew only existed as a product of his fancy, affords a simple example of this condition. He said that his fear was absurd, therefore it was useless to point out to him its absurdity; the proper course was to show

that it was not absurd, that it had a cause, and that the cause was something in the past which, when recognised, could be reasoned away. Fortunately the cause was easily found by any one with a knowledge of modern war : there was soon brought to light a 'forgotten' memory of his mates being drowned in shell-holes at night, and the fear disappeared as the patient learnt to look his memories in the face and not sink them into his unconscious.

More striking, however, are those cases in which a man forgets all his war experiences, and, though he is ready to believe that he has spent, say, two years in France, has no recollection of them. Such cases are not rare, the loss of memory often including part or all of the patient's previous life. One man could only remember the last three months of his life and failed to recognise his own father, though his memory was subsequently restored ; this loss, occurring suddenly, could hardly be in any degree voluntary, though it served the purpose of excluding many horrible memories from his consciousness. Another nervous lad was so constituted that he forgot all incidents that frightened him, only to be haunted by the emotions attached to them. Seeing a steeple-jack fall was forgotten, and produced nightmares for years ; a practical joke gave him a terror of the dark ; his sister calling to him when burglars were in the house gave him hallucinations of voices ; and minor incidents were equally forgotten, each producing its own symptoms. As the individual memories were brought

up from his unconscious he went through the fright again, but the associated symptoms soon disappeared.

In these pathological losses of memory, whether for one incident or for a whole period, it is important to note that the patient does not necessarily recognise the incident when he is told of it, just as the lad mentioned above failed to recognise his father when he met him. A patient may in a sleep-walking state act as if performing a definite action, such as bayoneting one of the enemy, and when awake deny all knowledge of such an incident ; yet the memory of it may return later with overwhelming emotion. This failure to recognise a personal experience is of great importance in the consideration of some spiritualist phenomena.

It requires little thought to realise that the only memories we try to repress are those that conflict with our other feelings or desires, and their repression is to some extent tolerated by a healthy man and may be regarded to that extent as a normal process.

But in addition to the repression of unpleasant memories there are other ways of forgetting. It has been assumed that each individual has a limit to his capacity for remembering, and that when that limit is reached fresh memories can be stored up only by casting out old ones. Whether that be so or not, it is certain that we can recall to consciousness only a tiny fraction of our past experiences, and no one can say what proportion that fraction bears to the whole contents of the store-

house of the unconscious. Let two men meet and recall old school-days spent together : one memory brings up another, schoolboy phrases and terms of speech appear as it were spontaneously, and by their united efforts the two recall far more than the sum of their recollections before the meeting, and still neither knows how much is left untouched.

The ordinary man reads many books, and each one leaves some impression and has some influence upon his later thoughts, though in time the recollection, not only of the contents of the book, but even of having read it, may fade away. This is the explanation of some cases of literary plagiarism : a previously read phrase comes up from the unconscious, and all recognisable connections with memory having been lost it is greeted as a fresh creation and given rank accordingly.

There is still another type of forgetting : most of us know the man who ' draws the long bow ', who embellishes his story and embroiders it with imagined incidents, whilst we listen and wonder how much the narrator himself believes. Fishermen's stories and snake yarns are examples, and one explains the mental process of the story-teller by saying, ' He's told the story so often that at last he believes it himself.' The process is really one of forgetting and is closely allied to the repression of an unpleasant memory, for the man is the victim of a mental conflict : on the one side is his desire to tell a good story, and on the other is his moral complex which forbids a lie, so he solves the conflict by forgetting that the embroideries

are inventions. This type is an important one, and what I shall call the ' repression of the knowledge of deceit ' plays an important part in the explanation of the abnormal phenomena with which this book deals. In tracing the development of the abnormal we must start with what is nearest the normal, and the man who embroiders his story gives an illustration of the simplest form of this particular repression.

Now, just as memories are repressed because they were repugnant to the other contents of the consciousness, so other complexes may be repugnant and meet the same fate. To be torn by conflicting emotions is the fate of most people at some time or other, and the conflict between two complexes may be solved in various ways. The healthy way is to face the difficulty, to reason it out, and reach a conclusion by which action may be guided ; another way, a common one, is to seclude one complex in a logic-tight compartment and so avoid the conflict. The man who uses sharp or shady methods in the city and is a gentle-minded philanthropist in other walks of life is using the latter method, and will produce such rationalisations as ' business is business ' when the contents of his different compartments need protection from each other.

But for some people such methods are impossible : either they cannot directly solve the conflict or they are too self-critical to build a logic-tight compartment, and in such cases a repression of one of the opposing complexes may result. In

this way complexes concerning ambitions and desires may be repressed, and so may those concerning fears and dislikes. The youth put to an uncongenial trade, the man or woman married to an unsuitable partner, may find no escape from the position and decide to bear it and forget its anxiety. How far this succeeds depends upon the previously existing tendencies of the individual: he may suffer no evil from the repression or, like the soldier's repressed war memories, it may manifest itself by indirect means and the unfortunate sufferer becomes a victim of one of the varied forms of neurosis.

The day-dreams of youth are rarely openly expressed: no one can tell what fantasies a child may have, and many of us are familiar with the thoughtful child who sits lost in meditation and presents an impenetrable barrier to the grown-up who would enter into the secrets of the day-dream. These fancies may be, and probably are, completely forgotten, but they can still lie in the unconscious, and Freud and his followers claim that they influence us throughout life.

CHAPTER IV

DISSOCIATION

AS you sit reading this book you perhaps cross your legs or move to an easier position. Did you think, 'My leg is beginning to feel tired, I'll shift it?' Did you even know you were shifting it? Watch a friend next time he drives you in his car. If he is an expert driver he will talk to you whilst his car slips through the traffic, and handle the various gears and controls as occasion arises without apparently giving any thought to the action; moreover, if you direct his attention to what he is doing he may do it with less accuracy than before—like the billiard player who carefully studies a shot and then makes a miss-cue. It is not sufficient to call the driving automatic, though that word is often used to describe actions of this type, for it is dependent upon innumerable stimuli that reach the driver's mind through all his senses and there produce sensations and impulses which have to be translated into actions. There is much real mind-work involved, and we must regard the driving as carried on by a part of his consciousness which is temporarily apart from his main stream, the latter being devoted to your intellectual entertainment.

So far as it concerns this example the splitting-off is normal. Most of us develop such capability in some way or other : the skilful pianist will talk while playing from sight a difficult passage, and the smoker carries out puffing actions by his little split-off stream whilst the main stream is solving the problem of the moment. All sorts of trivial actions are done unknown to the doer. For instance, a man whilst reading may have the habit of turning a pencil over and over and if any one gently removes the pencil he will reach out for it and continue to turn it, whilst his main stream knows nothing of the little by-play.

We see that consciousness is not fully and evenly aware of all our actions ; some actions with their accompanying mental process can be carried on by an independent stream and, as in the case of the pianist, the streams are of such balanced complexity that we can regard them as co-equal. Others, like turning over the pencil, are associated with such a lack of awareness that they hardly seem conscious, and if they are regarded as due to a split-off stream the stream is a very minor one.

This loss of awareness can be carried further, and actions involving complicated processes can be performed without the main personality knowing of them. The easiest example by way of illustration is automatic writing, often carried out by Planchette, which is a small platform mounted on wheels and bearing a pencil whose point touches a sheet of paper. If two people, sitting opposite

each other, place their finger-tips upon the platform it immediately begins to move, for unless the muscular push of one operator is absolutely balanced by that of the other the apparatus moves away from one of them ; the other person straightway resists the movement and pushes in an opposite direction, and thus a see-saw motion is kept up which the operators cannot stop. The resulting scrawls on the paper may be deciphered according to fancy, but with practice a legible product is obtained ; further, some people are able to concentrate the mind upon, or in other words fill the stream of consciousness with, another set of ideas by means of talking or reading, so that the automatic writing is carried on by a split-off stream of which the main stream is unaware. One person can use Planchette alone, though the experiment is oftener carried out as described above because unintended movements are more readily produced by two operators.

By this trick of splitting-off, or dissociation, the operator is able to allow ideas and memories from the unconscious to come to the surface unrestrained by the cramping control of the consciousness ; hence the product of the automatism is usually fantastic and imaginative, though memories are available which may be beyond the reach of the consciousness.

An excellent example of this dissociation is given in *The Gate of Remembrance*, a book which I shall consider later.

The view might be held that the dissociated

stream is really a part of the unconscious whose results make themselves manifest in the consciousness, as I described in the first chapter when writing about intuition ; but in automatic writing the main personality is not aware of the results : the dissociated writer does not know what he has written until he reads it, and it may be as much news to him as to a bystander.

The two streams of thought flowing side by side exemplify one kind of dissociation of consciousness, and others of this kind will be described later ; this type I shall call *continuous dissociation*, but there is another which at first sight seems quite different and of which I will give an example :—

An ex-soldier suffered from fears and depressions which made his life a misery, and an endeavour was made to find the cause in a repressed memory. His account of events was complete up to a certain time, but there his recollections ceased ; then one day something touched up the hidden memory and in the presence of his doctor he went through a most dramatic scene, showing horror at falling down a dark dug-out upon the bodies of dead Germans and at subsequent experiences which had strongly affected him and whose revival produced again the same emotions as the original events. At the next interview the following dialogue took place :—

'I want you to tell me about falling down the dug-out.'

'What dug-out, sir ?'

'The one you told me about last time.'

'I don't remember telling you about it.'

'Yes you do, the dug-out at . . . .'

'No, I don't remember any dug-out at . . . .'

There was no reason why the man should lie, and his expression of surprise and absence of other emotion seemed indicative of truth. When the doctor made the man close his eyes and thus shut out his present surroundings the memory returned with strong emotional reaction, less intense, however, than on the former occasion.

This case can be explained by regarding his repressed complex as lying in the unconscious, held there by the repugnance he felt towards it; then during the interview with the doctor it rose into consciousness and swept every other thought away. The stream of consciousness was suddenly cut off, its place being taken by this new stream with its recollections and emotions, and when the ordinary consciousness resumed its flow there was no connection between it and the dramatic episode which had interrupted, so that all memory of the episode was lost.

We can picture the repressed complex not as lying in the unconscious but as forming a dissociated stream flowing parallel with the main one, and showing its presence by producing those apparently causeless fears and depressions from which the patient suffered, till it suddenly swept aside the main stream and took its place. This alternative view shows the absence of any sharp division between the concept of the unconscious and of a dissociated consciousness, and at the same

time brings this *abrupt dissociation* into harmony with continuous dissociation. Such a dissociation, but with less emotional contents, can persist for a long time, the subject living, as it were, the life of the dissociated stream. Then we have a man with no memory of his previous life, but whose repressed memories, desires, or troubles, forming a complex in the unconscious, have finally broken across the stream of consciousness and taken its place as a second personality. Such instances have been described[1] as 'double personalities', and to this group belong those cases in which a man is found wandering with all memory of his name or associations gone. In soldiers with repressed war memories the repression may include the whole of their war experiences, and they can tell nothing of, say, a year spent in France; here, as long as the repression continues, there is the potentiality of the outbreak of a second personality.

The story of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, stripped of those portions which R. L. Stevenson introduced to make it suit his public—the bodily change and the drugs which produced it—can be read with interest as a study of the development of a dissociation, the main personality being aware of the dissociated stream but unable to control it when once the splitting-off had been accomplished.

A less fanciful story of a dissociation is given in *A Tale of Two Cities*, where the unfortunate Dr. Manette, having learnt shoemaking whilst a

[1] See the *Psychology of Insanity*.

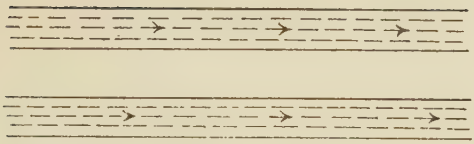
prisoner in the Bastille, insists on retaining his tools and material after he is rescued and brought to England, in times of stress secluding himself for a period and living his old life again, working at the old employment and hardly aware of the real world around him.

The source of the story might be made a subject of research by the Dickens Fellowship, for it is too accurate to be purely a fantasy of Charles Dickens, who, like all of his craft that live, was no mean psychologist. Even Dr. Manette's insistence upon retaining his tools, unaware as he was of his own reason for doing so, is consistent with what really happens when a dissociated stream influences the personality.

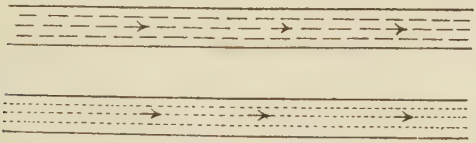
The different degrees of dissociation can be represented diagramatically. (See opposite page.)

It is to be noted that the dissociation may be the result of purposive action on the part of the subject, though, as will be seen in later chapters, an entirely wrong interpretation may be given to it by the person most concerned and by other people as well ; or it may be the result of a repression, and in that case any interpretation given by the subject must necessarily be a wrong one, for he is ignorant of its cause on account of the mechanism of repression, or, to put it differently, if he knows the cause it is no longer repressed.

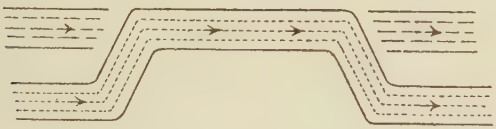
Once again I will emphasise the difficulty of drawing a line between normal and abnormal. My boy guide referred to in Chapter I was as



Two streams of equal value and under the same control. Examples: The pianist and the motor-car driver. *A normal phenomenon,* but linked to the next class by cases of absent-mindedness.



Two streams, one being the ordinary stream of consciousness and the other a stream not under the control of the main personality, which is concerned only with the ordinary stream. Examples: automatic writing, water-divining and hysteria (see Chapter VIII). *Continuous dissociation.*



A continuous dissociation with a sudden irruption of the dissociated into the main stream, completely replacing it for a period. Examples: The case of the ex-soldier and those of double personality; also somnambulisms and spiritualist trances. *Abrupt dissociation.*

near normal as could be, though the means by which he kept his course might be described as a product of dissociation. If he had been imaginative and I credulous he could have foisted upon me a supernatural explanation of his powers and taken his place with clairvoyants and water-diviners. But there are manifestations of distinctly abnormal character to explain which is the object of this book, and for the people producing these manifestations I propose the name of Dissociates, since dissociation is the key to the understanding of the phenomena they present.

The logic-tight compartments previously described are to be regarded as partial dissociations to which we are all liable, the partitions being unrecognised by their owner and the contents kept apart from the modifying influences of the main personality. Hence when the onlooker becomes aware of the presence of such a dissociation he does not judge the contents of the compartment by the same standard that he applies to the person as a whole.

There is nothing fresh in this point of view, which is admitted when virulent political opponents can be good friends by each ignoring the dissociated prejudices of the other, or in everyday life when in some circles the discussion of political or religious subjects is avoided for the sake of good fellowship.

Extreme dissociation by reason of a logic-tight compartment is shown in that kind of insanity in which the sufferer behaves as an ordinary being

with ordinary actions and ideas except for the influence of a systematised delusion (generally persecutory or grandiose) of most irrational type which is impregnable to explanation or argument. On all other points the man is sane, and the purely mental origin of the disease is suggested by his remaining in good health and without mental deterioration apart from the delusional system, in this respect differing greatly from the sufferers from most other forms of insanity. Some psychiatrists claim to have traced the delusions back to repressions that took place in early life.[1]

[1] For a fuller account of dissociation I would refer the reader to *The Psychology of Insanity*, by Dr. Bernard Hart, to which I am indebted for the form of some of my ideas. (Cambridge University Press.)

CHAPTER V

WATER-DIVINING

WATER-DIVINING, or dowsing, is accepted in many parts of the world and used as a practical method of locating underground water. Official bodies as well as private individuals employ practitioners of the art, and among people generally there is a strong belief in its genuineness.

It is carried out by means of a forked twig, hazel by traditional preference, which is grasped in the dowser's two hands and is said to be twisted upwards by an unknown force when there is water underground. As an addition it is sometimes claimed that the twig will indicate the presence of metals by being twisted downwards.

Believers in the twisting of the twig are generally ignorant that it was formerly used in the pursuit and detection of criminals and the finding of buried treasure[1] and that it was being used in the year 1918 to locate a seam of coal. Going farther afield, we learn that the witch-findings practised by African savages are sometimes carried out by means of a stick which points at the victim.

[1] See Janet, op. cit., p. 368, where he also says: 'Il est probable que, dans quelques campagnes, subsiste encore la croyance aux révélations de la baguette divinatoire.'

Such varied uses demand a new and complicated system of physics if the results are due to any forces external to the diviner, but my own observations satisfy me that we need not overturn our ordinary conceptions of cause and effect to explain the different properties of the divining-rod.

When a friend told me of the presence of a dowser in the neighbourhood and gave me a would-be convincing account of how he had seen him at work, how the twig was twisted upwards with such force that my informant was unable to depress it, and how the man was employed by engineers to tell them where to sink wells, I became interested and asked to see the marvel. The resulting experiment, though conducted haphazard, was instructive as regards both water-divining and credulity.

The man broke a forked twig from a bush, and, holding it in the way described later, was directed down a path leading to a tennis-court. Along this path no water was known to exist, but the twig rose twice. Beneath the tennis-court ran a water-pipe which had burst during the previous winter, and of which the position was known to six at least of those present. This pipe was located by the man, and he demonstrated it again and again by walking across it, the twig rising each time. It rose again when he was directed past a cook-house. Next he was sent along a path leading from the cook-house to the main building, and the twig rose several times. He said, ' There is water all along here ', and was told that there

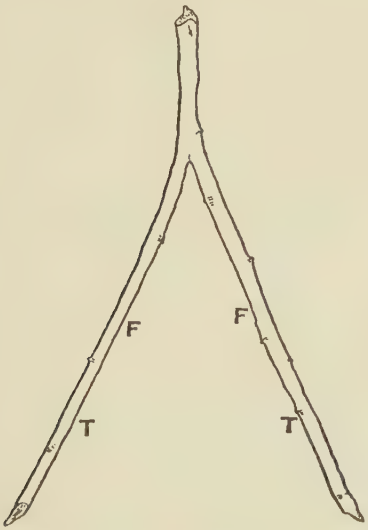
was a pipe running along the path. Here I intervened and asked him to try across one edge of the path, which was about six feet wide. The twig rose, and, just as on the tennis-court, he walked again and again across the indicated line, the twig rising every time, though as a fact the pipe lay on the other side of the path. He explained to us that God gave 'the gift' to Moses, and that now only one man in ten thousand received the gift.

When he left I took a twig and showed that I had the gift, or, at least, that the twig performed in my hands exactly as it had done in his. 'But', said my friends, 'he found the pipe on the tennis-court.' It mattered nothing that he had found water twice within a few yards where none was known, or that at least six of the bystanders knew of the existence of the water-pipe and were ready to show their anticipation as he approached it and their delight when he located it, nor that he located the other pipe on the wrong side of the path. The movements of the twig might be a fraud, his other finds might be failures or guesses, but his one success was enough for them. Even the Padre, when I said that the man had the face typical of a mystic, was moved to ask, 'But may not a mystic have powers of which we know nothing?'

In short, the rising of the twig was produced by the man himself, and his findings were guesses, aided by ordinary knowledge as to where water-pipes are to be expected, and more especially aided by the attitude and expression of the bystanders.

Yet by his manner he showed that he plainly believed in his own powers : otherwise his reference to the gift of God was simple blasphemy, and he seemed an earnest man.

How can we explain this belief on the one hand and the trickery on the other ? First let us examine the mechanism involved in the upward



twisting of the twig. Suppose you take a tough and springy forked twig, each arm of the fork being about nine or ten inches long, hold it with the apex away from you, and, with your palms facing together and your finger-tips pointing upward, place the thumb and little finger of each hand inside the fork at the places marked T and F.

Now close each hand, and you have each arm of the fork firmly gripped ; next, keeping your elbows well in, bend the arms of the fork outward as in Fig. 2, with your palms now looking upward. You will then find that a sort of trigger action tends to occur, and by a slight pressure of your ring-fingers against the twig you can make it rise. Still gripping firmly and pressing your hands a little together you will find it continues to rise, and by bending your hands downwards at the wrists and pressing your elbows to your side you can easily persuade an observer, and perhaps

yourself, that you are trying to hold the twig down. You may even find that it leaves a pressure mark on your little finger, which you can show as evidence of how you tried to restrain it. If one arm of the fork is weaker than the other it may break, and that of course will be conclusive proof of the working of a mysterious power. So we see there is nothing very strange in the man believing that his muscular action was not responsible for the moving of the twig ; but his two-sided make-up—piety on one side and trickery on the other—can best be explained by a dissociation,

with repression of the knowledge of trickery as far as the main personality is concerned. We might split up his consciousness like this :—

Piety, and belief in water-divining as the gift of God.	Knowledge of the means employed. Hypersensitive mechanism for carrying it on.

Perhaps it is unfair to talk of trickery ; he may have deceived himself from the start and never known that he was deceiving any one.

At first I pictured him as learning the trick from some one else, trying it on with his friends—maybe across a bridge over a stream—and being taken seriously, and then, when he could not escape from his reputation without owning up to the fraud, being compelled for his peace of mind to repress the deceit complex and carry on as a Dissociate. The man himself would be the last person to gain information from, for his repression, however it began, is now complete.

The discussion that followed the experiment was instructive : most of the bystanders appeared to believe in the existence of some unknown force of nature operating through a specially-gifted person, the mechanism of the twig being unnoticed and the greatest emphasis placed upon the one success. I have no doubt that in a short time the memory of that one success would be the only part of the performance not forgotten. Moreover, if any one of the bystanders had told me the story, describing fully and fairly everything he had observed, I should have been unable to criti-

cise the facts thus presented and denial of the miraculous would have been ineffectual ; yet these bystanders were all educated and intelligent men.

With the information gained from this experiment I was able to understand the next example. The subject was mentioned in a provincial newspaper, and incidentally a story was told of how a dowser who also had the power of locating metals was able by means of the twig to indicate the position of two sovereigns concealed under a carpet, showing the relationship of water-divining to some forms of 'thought reading.' In the next number of the paper appeared 'some corroborative testimony' from a well-known local gentleman, who was also a dowser, and some of his testimony I will quote :—

'I have had twigs as thick as my little finger twist off and break after scoring my hand until it was red. The muscles of the arm become contracted when the bodily magnetism is affected by the presence of water, and a strong spring will make my arms ache badly. It is quite true that only running water affects me, and on one occasion I had a curious example of this. It was on a Saturday evening, and I quite accidentally found the presence of water close to a house where my sister was living. The following day I told her about the spring and tried the spot, when no effect was observable. On enquiry she told me that there was a pipe underneath connected with a ram which was always put out of action on Sunday.'

Further on, referring to another incident, he says :—

'I had dowsed the ground, and in addition had noted, with the help of an eminent geologist, the geological

strata. The dowsing satisfied me that the ground was full of water: the geological survey suggested the best place to collect it. I suppose the power must have something to do with the composition of the blood and nerve cells, but I have never yet come across a scientific explanation of the power, which is certainly possessed by many people.[1]

Here we have a country gentleman of indisputable honesty and intelligence attributing to unknown forces such movements and sensations as any one can produce who follows the preceding instructions, water or no water being present. The ' bodily magnetism ' is a pure rationalisation and beyond discussion, but the story of the pipe and the ram is different : a ram is a pump worked by a stream of water and the noise of it is carried a long way, especially along any pipe connected with it, and if I told this gentleman that he had heard the noise of the ram he would strenuously deny the possibility, and might challenge me to test whether I could hear the noise ; but I have no dissociated water-divining personality unhampered by my conscious efforts and trained to pick up such indications. It would seem incredible to him that he heard the noise of the ram on the Saturday, failed to hear it on the Sunday, deduced that the water was no longer running, and then showed this deduction by refraining from tilting up the twig ; but with our knowledge of dissociation and repression, and of the working of the unconscious, we can understand all this taking place without his main stream of consciousness being aware of it.

The reference to geology is also instructive ; he evidently has a knowledge of that subject, and he might perhaps admit that the indications of the twig coincided with the geological indications, though he is unaware of and cannot admit any dependence of the former on the knowledge of the latter.

Thus in both these cases the likelihood of the presence of water is only a matter of observation—skilled and minute no doubt—and the movement of the twig is in no way caused by any physical forces except those exercised by the muscles of the dowser. That the second personality of the dowser is able to deceive him is now explained, and his obvious honesty so influences non-critical observers that their credulity is no cause for wonder.

An example of water-divining without dissociation was given me by Dr. W. H. Bryce, of Fifeshire, whose words are as follows :—

> 'There was an old Scot who was reputed to be very skilful in finding water and who was so employed throughout his neighbourhood. He was not above using the twigs, but told me they were no use, but he judged entirely by the lie of the land. In his own language he always looked for the "rise of the metals" in looking for water. A diviner came to the neighbourhood and located water in two places. In the one place the old countryman said, "How can he get water there ? Now at the top of the den where the metals rise each way he might get it." Bores were sunk at both places that the diviner indicated, but no water was got.'

This man would probably have refused such a test as locating a water-pipe, for his conclusions

were based upon conscious reasoning and he would be incapable of making guesses or picking up indications from the behaviour of bystanders; therefore in the eyes of the credulous he would be inferior to the wonder-working dowser.

One repeatedly hears stories of how the dowser has found water when geologists have failed, but the man who is sufficiently uncritical to accept the working of the twig as due to some strange 'gift' is likely to be as credulous in observation and beliefs concerning the rest of the phenomena.

CHAPTER VI

SUGGESTION

'THE power of suggestion' is a plausible explanation of varied phenomena. By it the feelings of a crowd are swayed, fashions are spread, mistakes are made, and beliefs are imposed upon the multitude, and in the production of hypnotic and hysterical manifestation the words 'power of suggestion' and 'personal magnetism' are sufficient explanation of all things visible and invisible.

'Personal magnetism' and its kindred phrases implying the existence of some subtle physical force are, except when used figuratively, mere incoherences, but suggestion is an undoubted cause of certain effects and we must try to understand the meaning of the word.

McDougall defines suggestion as 'a process of communication resulting in the acceptance with conviction of the communicated proposition in the absence of logical grounds for its acceptance'.[1]

Our thinking (apart from the observation of cause and effect in the small affairs of ordinary life) is generally a matter of complexes, logic being concerned only in rare cases; hence if we use the

[1] *Social Psychology*, p. 97.

above definition the greater part of our accepted propositions owe their acceptance to suggestion. This is true as regards most of our political, religious, and social beliefs, and, since children believe what they are taught chiefly because the teacher says so, there does not seem much opinion or knowledge of the abstract for which suggestion is not accountable.

If a suggestion agrees with the complexes already existing in the mind of the hearer then acceptance is likely to follow ; this partly explains the psychology of crowds and the power of oratory, which appeals to emotions and prejudice rather than to reason. The knowledge that one's fellows believe is sufficient to convince the ordinary man, and often the existence of widespread belief is used as an argument to prove the truth of a proposition. One recognises this tendency at once in people of another race and other superstitions. An educated Chinese once assured me that blood from those nearly related would mix if dropped into a bowl of water, and drops from the veins of strangers would remain apart, and that this test was used to decide cases of disputed relationship. When I showed incredulity my friend assured me, 'It's true, quite true, every one knows it.'

Within a day or two an Englishman, whilst discussing telegony, or the influence of a first mating upon the progeny of subsequent pairings, maintained that the widespread belief among dog-breeders in the existence of this influence proved

its truth, and my recollection of the argument of my Chinese friend showed me how alike are the causes of belief among all mankind.

Man tends to believe what his fellows believe and act as his fellows act, and this tendency has been erected into an instinct by Trotter, who shows how important the Herd Instinct is to all gregarious animals, including man.[1]

But if suggestion is to be made synonymous with the Herd Instinct it explains too much, and we must seek to narrow its meaning or use another word. It is already used in a somewhat special sense to account for the acceptance of propositions which an ordinary man in his ordinary state of mind would not accept, and especially is it used in relation to abnormal states such as hypnosis and hysteria.

An authoritative and confident manner makes easy the acceptance of suggestion, as every confidence-trick man knows ; the writer of advertisements or political articles knows it too, but in the last example we see a new factor. The hardened Big-ender would be impervious to the most imposing suggestions from a Little-endian source, but would accept the saddest nonsense from a journal of his own party. We see here an active desire to accept propositions that accord with a powerful complex, and as complexes become more separated from the influence of reason so this desire increases.

This I shall call ' receptivity ', and to the term I shall give a further meaning in the sense not

[1] *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War.* T. Fisher Unwin.

only of desiring to accept propositions but of anticipating or guessing them, of picking up hints as to what is in the minds of the other persons concerned and reflecting them as if they originated in the mind of the receiver.

In some cases of hysteria the patient presents a weak or paralysed limb, and this limb is often so insensitive that pins may be pushed through the skin without any manifestations of pain. This phenomenon, which resembles the insensitive patches that under the name of 'Devil's claws' were found upon witches when witchcraft was fashionable, has been long known as a sign of hysteria. There is now a tendency to ascribe it to suggestibility or, as I should prefer, to receptivity.

In the early stage of the disease some one examines the arm, pricks it, and asks, 'Do you feel that?' It is my experience that the patient sometimes flinches at the first prick, but answers 'No', and until this newly-implanted belief is removed he never flinches again when the limb is pricked.

The question is taken by the patient to mean that the doctor expects that the prick will not be felt—or why should he ask? The hint is accepted and the insensibility established, though its unreal nature is shown by the fact that the patient is not especially disposed to burn or injure the limb, unlike the sufferer from a true loss of sensation, who is always liable to such an accident owing to the lack of the protective sense of pain. I believe that this is the true explanation for many cases,

and put it forward as a good example of receptivity.

The insensitiveness is similarly explained by Babinski,[1] who uses a different method of examination. He blindfolds the patient, who must not have been subjected to a previous test, and stimulating him variously in different places asks what he feels. This avoids the suggestion of loss of sensation, and the result is that Babinski finds few examples of such loss in cases where the 'Do you feel that ?' method would produce many positive results.

It may also be explained by a dissociation of consciousness, in which the split-off stream deals with the paralysed limb and therefore the main stream of consciousness knows nothing about the prick. The difference between the two theories is not so great as appears, for the control of the supposed loss of sensation, once it is established, finds its home in a split-off stream, and the process I describe is only a stage in the dissociation.

I must admit, however, to seeing cases where a hysterical loss of voice of long duration is accompanied by a loss of sensation in the throat which is not explicable by receptivity, and it is possible for the dissociation to be directly responsible for the loss.

Jung expresses sound views when he writes :—

'It should long ago have been realised that a suggestion is only accepted by one it suits. . . . This pseudo-scientific

[1] *Hysteria or Pithiatism and Nervous Troubles of Reflex Order.* London University Press.

talk about suggestion is based upon the unconscious superstition that suggestion actually possesses some magic power. No one succumbs to suggestion unless from the very bottom of his heart he be willing to co-operate.' [1]

Whilst stripping suggestion of its magic I by no means deny its power. Let one person at a dinner suggest that the fish is tainted and he will generally have one or two supporters who would have eaten it without a doubt of its freshness if no one had cast suspicion upon it ; or let one of a class of medical students say with sufficient assurance that he hears a murmur over a patient's heart and, even if the heart sounds are quite ordinary, others will hear it too.

There are conditions, such as fatigue or sleep, in which the effort necessary to examine the truth of a proposition seems too great, and suggestions are accepted which would be rejected in a state of fuller consciousness. For example, I was awakened one night, when a hospital resident, and told that one of my patients was very restless. I could not remember the man, but asked a few questions about him and ordered a soporific. Next morning on waking I became aware that I had no such patient, and on enquiry found that I had been mistaken for another resident whose slumbers had been undisturbed, thanks to my suggestibility, for had I been fully awake I should have repudiated any connection with the case. The confident

[1] *Analytical Psychology*, p. 469. Baillière, Tindall & Cox, 1917.

manner of the messenger assisted the suggestion, and I like to think that had there been a trick intentionally played upon me even my sleepy consciousness might have detected some warning change of tone.

Psychologists regard hypnotic suggestibility as only a further stage of this sleepy non-resistance, but I see in the former a more active desire to accept. Though suggestion might be further classified according to the factors concerned in its acceptance, the class showing 'receptivity' is the important one for our consideration.

There remains auto-suggestion to be considered; it is as difficult to define as suggestion, but in the absence of any more precise term it must be accepted as indicating certain mental processes.

The sensations felt in the arms and hands by the water-diviner or table-turner are partly the result of auto-suggestion and partly of muscular contractions, themselves produced by the same cause, and some of the varied sensations of the hysteric are of similar origin. Creepy feelings at the mention of snakes, and unpleasant sensations at the thought of those 'minor horrors of war' that live in undergarments, are further examples.

As far as the persons concerned are able to judge, the sensations are often real enough, though it was long before I could believe that a confirmed hysteric who complained of a severe pain really suffered from that pain; the description of a water-

diviner's sensations, given by himself and quoted in another chapter, are such that one must believe in the honesty of the writer.

One might say auto-suggestion arises from the unconscious or from a dissociated stream of consciousness, and this would make it account for hallucinations and obsessions, but here we must again take account of borderline cases. The person who feels a cold shiver at the mention of a snake cannot tell us precisely to what extent the shiver is due to conscious thoughts, or whether he feels it just because he must ; and the feeling may be due to what he remembers being told about snakes, in which case it would not be due to pure auto-suggestion.

The explanation of the success of suggestion in particular cases is to be sought in the emotional state of the subject. When I was the victim, as described above, my readiness to believe arose from my being accustomed to nocturnal interruptions when my patients were in trouble and also from my reliance on the hospital staff, my emotional state being one of expectation and confidence. If to these influences are added stronger emotional forces, such as wonder or terror, acceptance of suggestion is still easier, and when people assembled together are swayed by these feelings the Herd Instinct reaches its full strength and we have the ingredients for the manufacture of a collective delusion. There are many examples of strange and supernatural occurrences vouched for by masses of observers, and I see no reason

to doubt the good faith of the historians. We all know how infectious is emotion and how hard it is for one man to remain unmoved when around him are others all under the influence of some excitement, and man always insists on finding reasons for his feelings or objects for his emotions. When wonder or terror are roused by the operation of the Herd Instinct, the individual, not knowing their origin, projects them externally and seeks an object for them. He is now ready to see or hear anything that will fit his emotions, and when an object is suggested he will speedily accept its existence as a reality.

I will give some further examples of suggestion in varying degrees of strength. During the arrival of recently wounded men at a hospital in France, I was in a ward with two eminent members of my profession and another medical officer. As one man seemed bad the sister asked me to see him at once ; his left arm was paralysed, and he had a wound on the head where in the brain beneath lies the ' motor area ' of the left arm. Looking at the wound, which was obscured by hair and blood, I said, ' That's pulsating ' ; the two consultants and the other officer agreed with my observation, and appropriate treatment was recommended. The importance of pulsation lies in the fact that it is a sign of the exposure of brain substance, which pulsates strongly, and in this case it signified the presence of a hole in the skull which allowed the pulsation to appear ; but in the operating theatre shortly afterwards the skull was

found intact, and therefore pulsation had not been present.

How did this joint error of observation arise? The combination of a gunshot wound of the head with a paralysed limb may occur in connection with a hole in the skull, and such penetrating wounds were common before the introduction of helmets. My unconscious had worked out the probabilities and led me to expect the signs of penetration; deceiving myself, by my confident manner I imposed my belief upon my colleagues, who had, I may assume, placed unjustified confidence in my reliability as an observer; and we all saw that which was not.

Another example shows how ghost stories arise: A man related to me how at the age of sixteen he was sleeping with his brother, and woke up to see a ghostly face on the wall. So far we have an ordinary half-awake hallucinatory condition, which is not uncommon; but the lad became terrified and tried to cover his head to hide the sight, when the brother woke up, and, being told of the face, promptly saw it too. The brother's evidence is strongly corroborative, not of the presence of a ghost, but of the power of suggestion when the way is prepared by strong emotion. It may be remarked that the man was one of those nervous people who fear the dark or being alone; seeing a ghost was not the cause of his condition, but resulted from the inculcation of a belief in ghosts in a person predisposed to fall a prey to his own unconscious.

The next example is a well-worn tale which has been quoted by Frank Podmore, W. H. Myers, Sir William Barrett, and probably many others. I take it from pages 62 and 63 of *Human Personality*, vol. i.[1]

It (the account) was given by Mr. Charles Lett on December 3, 1885, and reads as follows :—

'On the 5th of April, 1873, my wife's father, Captain Towns, died at his residence, Cranbrook, Rose Bay, near Sydney, New South Wales. About six weeks after his death my wife had occasion, one evening about nine o'clock, to go to one of the bedrooms in the house. She was accompanied by a young lady, Miss Britton, and as they entered the room—the gas was burning all the time —they were amazed to see, reflected as it were upon the polished surface of the wardrobe, the image of Captain Towns. It was barely half-figure, the head, shoulders, and part of the arms only showing—in fact it was like an ordinary medallion portrait, but life-size. The face appeared wan and pale, as it did before his death ; he wore a kind of grey flannel jacket, in which he had been accustomed to sleep. Surprised and half alarmed at what they saw, their first idea was that a portrait had been hung in the room, and that what they saw was its reflection, but there was no picture of the kind.

'Whilst they were looking and wondering, my wife's sister, Miss Towns, came into the room, and before either of the others had time to speak, she exclaimed, "Good gracious ! Do you see Papa ?" One of the housemaids happened to be passing downstairs at the moment and she was called in, and asked if she saw anything, and her reply was "Oh, Miss : the master." Graham—Captain Towns' old body-servant—was then sent for, and he also exclaimed, "Oh, Lord save us ! Mrs. Lett, it's the Captain !" The butler was called, and then Mrs. Crane,

[1] Longmans & Co., London, 1903.

my wife's nurse, and they both said what they saw. Finally Mrs. Towns was sent for, and, seeing the apparition, she advanced towards it . . . as she passed her hand over the panel of the wardrobe the figure gradually faded away, and never again appeared.

'These are the facts of the case, and they admit of no deceit; no kind of intimation was given to any of the witnesses; the same question was put to each one as they came into the room, and the reply was given without hesitation by each.

'Mrs. Lett is positive that the recognition of the appearance on the part of each of the later witnesses was *independent*, and not due to any suggestion from the persons already in the room.'

Then follows a statement by two of the witnesses that this account is correct.

In the lapse of twelve years between the incident and its narration a story of this nature would have been re-told many times, and we know what happens under such conditions. As the tale is given, however, it reveals more than the narrator thinks it does.

Most interesting is the denial of suggestion when we have present all the factors necessary for suggestion of the most powerful kind. Picture Miss Towns coming into the room whilst the first two were 'looking and wondering' (and not in silence, we may be sure, in spite of the words 'before either of the others had time to speak', which are interpolated to strengthen the story); she straightway experiences the same emotion as do the others and sees what they see. Now we have three emotional people, and as each new witness is brought along the emotion increases

till it would require a very self-possessed and sceptical person to resist its influence. The butler and the nurse simply *had* to see the ghost, though the account is a little ambiguous at that point.

'The same question was put to each one as they came into the room', but is it likely that under such a condition of excitement enough self-control was left to every individual to ensure that the same question, *and nothing else*, was put to each newcomer? Such a thing could only happen by careful pre-arrangement, which was lacking here, and the writer's insistence shows that somewhere in his mind was present the suspicion that suggestion had a hand in the production of the unanimous evidence.

Mrs. Lett is equally insistent that the recognition was not due to any suggestion from the persons already in the room, but she was unaware that suggestion can occur without intent and that the most powerful suggestion is that which is unintentional. Can we suppose that there were no signs of wonder and awe on the faces of those present, no excited exclamations, no glances towards the wardrobe, no pointing of hands: only a few calm and self-possessed people asking each newcomer if he or she saw anything? If two or three people tried by suggestion to persuade others to see a ghost they would not be able to reach the emotional state of the actors in this scene, and the intentional effort at suggestion would have a good chance of failure.

The minute account of the apparition, given by some one who was not present, and told as if it were the result of the immediate observations of the first two witnesses, has been influenced by discussion after the incident and is itself another product of suggestion. The narrator has overshot the mark in his protest against the possibility of suggestion, and has produced a story in which the apparition is not the only improbability.

I have given this analysis because the story is quoted repeatedly by writers on the spiritualist side, and until one examines it critically it appears convincing.

The rumour of the Russian troops passing through England in September, 1914, will go down in history as a proof that mass credulity was then as powerful as ever. The rumour, however it began, was aided by the usual forces: Herd Instinct (for what every one believed was felt to be true), the desire to believe in what we wanted to happen, and the desire to be personally connected with important events. The last factor was shown by the number of people who claimed to have personal experience of the transit of the Russian reinforcements; every one had seen the troops or knew some one who had. One of my friends, a man eminent in a profession which demands clear thinking, told me that his own brother-in-law was responsible for arrangements for their railway transport.

The reader will see in this rumour a perfect

example of the working of suggestion in a case familiar to every one, and if the lesson is borne in mind a list of believers in some unnatural occurrence will not necessarily carry conviction.

CHAPTER VII

HYPNOTISM

THE history of hypnotism is closely associated with that of charlatanry, though at some periods the practice has reached an honourable position in therapeutics. The ' temple sleep ' of ancient Greek medicine was a hypnosis, but in later days hypnotism fell into oblivion till the time of Mesmer, when it was so mingled with quackery and theatrical display that some disrepute is even to this day attached to its honest use in curative medicine.

The common attitude to it is one of mistrust. Thanks to its exploitation by novelists, ' hypnotic power ' is regarded as marvellous and uncanny, and the mysterious person who exercises it is able to lead his victims along any path. The fashion for public shows of Mesmerism has apparently died away, their place being taken by thought-reading performances which cater for the desire of man to believe that he is seeing a manifestation of the occult.

The ' mesmeric eye ', whose pupil dilates or contracts at the will of its owner while its gaze remains fixed, has by imaginative writers been ascribed alike to Lord Kitchener and the monk

Rasputin, and presents a phenomenon unknown to physiologists. The 'will-power' of the hypnotist is as much a product of imagination, whilst the confident and willing co-operation of the subject is really the factor of most importance.

Nobody but a very credulous person can be hypnotised against his will, and at the beginning of the process the full co-operation of the subject is necessary, though with repeated sittings his suggestibility becomes increased and to that extent his 'will-power' may be said to have diminished.

In the induction of hypnosis the essentials are quiet surroundings and confidence of success on the part of both operator and subject. The subject is then led to think only of the operator and his remarks and directions, whilst generally some mechanical method is used which by tiring the eyes produces a feeling of sleepiness. Success varies according to the skill and confidence of the operator and their persuasive effect on the subject.

Several sittings may be necessary before any depth of hypnosis is obtained. If the result is successful the stream of consciousness is thinned out and its place is taken by other thoughts and suggestions supplied by the operator. In light hypnosis there is produced a condition in which suggestions concerning, say, the cessation of bad habits or modes of thought are more readily accepted than in the normal state of consciousness, the subject having afterwards a complete memory of the sitting. In deeper stages hypnotic sleep is

produced, suggestions concerning the bodily functions—producing, for example, temporary rigidity or paralysis or loss of feeling—may take effect, and the memory of the sitting may not be recalled afterwards ; the subject may carry out various movements by direction of the operator, and may believe what his senses should contradict. In this deeper stage he is in a condition to receive suggestions as to actions to be performed after the hypnotic state has ceased.

The explanation of the increased suggestibility of the hypnotic subject lies in the abolition, total or partial, of his stream of consciousness. Such critical powers as he possesses are suspended and he has no standard by which to judge assertions presented to him, like a man in a dream who through a similar absence of standards of comparison sees no absurdity in the suspension of the laws of gravity. The unconscious of the subject is now accessible to suggestions which may be planted there and will bear fruit even if the subject is unaware of them. It is an experimental commonplace for a subject, told in a hypnotic state to perform a simple but unnecessary action after waking, to invent a rationalisation to account for doing it, whilst having no suspicion that he does it as a result of suggestion.

But throughout all the stages he still has a volition of his own and will do nothing that seriously conflicts with his well-rooted ideas of conduct. If he is persuaded that an imaginary some one is sitting in a chair, and is directed to

stab him with an imaginary knife, he will perhaps do so, for he would not object to doing so in his waking state ; but suggest to him that he should steal a real watch, and if he be a man of ordinary honesty he will find reasons for not stealing it, though perhaps the man of criminal tendencies would fall to the suggestion.

A story in illustration of this resistance was told me by a doctor who practised hypnotism for the cure of the alcohol habit. Having successfully suggested to a patient that whisky would produce nausea, he congratulated himself on a cure, but to his annoyance the patient came home one day cheerfully intoxicated with beer. Further hypnosis was tried and, although the hypnotic state was induced as before, suggestion had no further effect on the drinking habit. It turned out that the patient had decided not to be cured of the beer habit, hence the failure.

In hypnosis we have another example of dissociation ; during the process of induction the stream of consciousness is thinned out or completely abolished according to the depth of hypnosis. The fact that there may or may not be during the waking state a recollection of the events in a previous hypnosis shows that the dissociation may be continuous or abrupt (see Chapter IV). The substituted stream is made up of suggestions from the operator and of material from the unconscious, for the hypnosis may be used to revive memories that have been lost to the consciousness through repression. In this last use

we see a relation to automatic writing and other methods of bringing to light the contents of the unconscious.

In my account of the water-diviner I suggested that his dissociated stream was especially trained to pick up indications that are not observed by his ordinary self. The study of the hypnotic state shows that our senses sometimes work better when freed from the control of the consciousness, so that the subject is able to see or hear or feel what is unobserved by the ordinary man. He possesses a hyperæsthesia such as we see in a sleeping dog who wakes at the approach of a footstep inaudible to the human ear and recognises whether it belongs to friend or stranger. A similar alertness and its opposite can be seen at work in ordinary sleep. The mother is roused by the slightest whimper of her babe, whilst louder noises pass unheard ; but the person who, with the best intention of breaking a bad habit, has an alarm clock by his bedside, may neglect its call for a few mornings and end by entirely failing to hear it.

The hyperæsthesia belonging to the unconscious is shown in other conditions than hypnosis and ordinary sleep. Jung quotes experiments [1] of Binet, who says : ' According to the calculations I have been able to make, the unconscious sensitiveness of a hysteric is on some occasions fifty times more acute than that of a normal person.'

Dr. Hurst, writing on War Neuroses,[2] says : ' In

[1] *Analytical Psychology*, p. 25.
[2] *British Medical Journal*, September 29, 1917.

one severe case true hyperacusis was present, and Captain E. A. Peters estimated that the patient heard sixteen times more acutely than the average normal individual. It was possible to carry on a conversation with him by whispering in one corner of the ward when he was lying in the opposite corner, although men with normal hearing who were standing half-way between in the centre of the room could not hear a word of what was whispered.'

I myself knew a war-strained patient who, as a result of terrifying experiences, had a dread of aeroplanes and could not only hear a plane long before his comrades but could tell at once by the hum of the engine whether it was British or German. In other respects his hearing was no better than his neighbour's.

Another case under my observation was that of a nervous lady with a fear of draughts. Whilst secluded in her bedroom she claimed to be affected when far-away doors were open, and showed a most uncanny and accurate knowledge as to whether they were open or shut, though this knowledge was probably derived from the sense of hearing and not from any sensitivity to heat or cold.

The word ' hyperæsthesia ' is used to denote an excessive acuity of our senses. The examples quoted above refer to the sense of hearing ; but other senses, such as touch and sight, may be similarly sharpened. Binet's experiments were carried out on the sense of touch.

There is no question here of the development of any new sense; the hyperæsthesia is only an exaggeration of the senses we already possess. Its importance lies in its common alliance with a dissociated receptivity which may lead it to be overlooked and cause its results to be ascribed to something else.

CHAPTER VIII

DREAMS

THE mystery of dreams and their interpretation has occupied men's thoughts in all ages. The Jews paid great attention to them, as the Old Testament shows, and there is evidence that the prophet Daniel had a shrewd knowledge, based upon psychological facts, concerning dream meanings.

There are probably 'Dream Books' still sold which purport to provide interpretations for the enquiring dreamer, but it is only in recent years that the scientific study of dreams has produced useful results.

Freud laid the foundations of our modern knowledge, but unfortunately certain parts of his theories have raised so much antagonism that the sound work he has done is still scorned and dream interpretation is regarded as fanciful; nevertheless I propose to show that in dreams we have a key to the unconscious of the dreamer.

Before attempting an explanation of dreams we must first consider sleep, which is an interruption of consciousness, so that whatever mind work is carried on in sleep is a product of dissociation. The interruption of consciousness is more or less

complete, the light sleeper reacting to external stimuli, turning away from a touch or making movements to protect himself from heat or cold, whilst the heavy sleeper fails to react to these minor disturbances. The memory of occurrences in the outside world during sleep may be vaguely present in the waking stage, and some sleepers will answer questions or obey orders without waking and have little or no recollection of them afterwards. Such observations point to a resemblance between sleep and that form of dissociation called hypnosis.

In hypnosis the memories and emotions in the unconscious may be brought to the surface, and in sleep the unconscious, escaping from the control of the consciousness, sends up thoughts and feelings which manifest themselves in dreams. How far external stimuli cause or influence dreams is uncertain, but the more one investigates the less importance does one attach to physical stimuli.

The dreams of adults are concerned largely with what I have described in a previous chapter as repressions. These repressions are buried in the unconscious, and their efforts to come into consciousness cause our apparently senseless and fantastic dreams. If we dreamed distinctly about these forgotten episodes, and remembered the dream on waking, they would come into consciousness and be recognised, but, being buried and refused admission to the wide-awake world, before entering consciousness they are so distorted

as to be unrecognisable. To the mechanism that holds them down or distorts them is given the name of the 'censor', and the interpreter of dreams must seek to evade the censor and resolve the distorted story into its proper elements.

This method is of value in that treatment of the war-strained soldier which aims at making him face his memories and grow accustomed to them, for if a memory is repressed it tends to appear in the sufferer's dreams, which give an opportunity for its recovery by dream analysis. The opponents of this method picture the analyst, armed with a dictionary of dream meanings, listening to a patient's account of a dream, then giving him an explanation and persuading him to believe it; but, though a shrewd guess may often be made as to the meaning of a dream, the interpretation, to be of any value, must come from the patient. He is made to close his eyes and, visualising the dream, to describe it carefully. If it is a terrifying dream the telling of it will reproduce the feeling of terror, and appropriate questions will recall the occasion on which the same feeling first occurred. If the real incident is recalled there is an emotional outbreak which often startles the observer, who has the satisfaction of knowing that the greater the outbreak the greater will be the benefit.

Here is an example of the practical use of a dream: The patient had lost all memory of his experience in France, and this loss spread to his life before the war so that he failed to recall even

his former employment ; he slept badly and had terrifying dreams, one of which was as follows :—

'I was on a pleasure steamer with a lot of cheerful people ; it went to sea and then entered a dark cavern. On the floor of the cavern were broken skeletons, and at the far end of the cavern was a hole with light showing through. Two pirates with cocked hats came and led seven of us up the cavern, where we saw some old men with whiskers. The pirates were quite kind and led us through another hole into a small cavern ; the wall of the cavern began to fall down, so I picked up a broken sword and began to bore into the wall. Then something like a ball of fire came at me, and I woke up frightened.'

Though the reader could probably guess what the dream was about yet the man had no idea of the meaning, for the censor was still at work. He was made to close his eyes and visualise the ball of fire till he became frightened again, so frightened, indeed, that he was in a state of dissociation, his stream of consciousness being filled by the feeling of terror and only in relation to the outside world by means of the voice of the questioner. (The fact that memories restored by this method are often forgotten again as soon as the patient opens his eyes is proof of a dissociation.) At this stage he was told, ' You felt like that in France, what was it ? ' The normal stream of consciousness being cut off, the censor was now out of action, and the man, putting his hands to his head, cried, ' It's a Minnewerfer ', and when he became calmer told of a dug-out being blown in and several of his mates being killed. Then he was taken over the dream and

made to look at the various parts and tell what they ' turned to '. The pleasure steamer was the boat in which he went to France, the cheery people on board being other soldiers ; he now recognised the place from which the boat started and the port where he landed. The cavern was a tunnel up which a captain and a sergeant-major (the pirates) had led seven men ; the cocked hats resolved into the sergeant-major having a piece torn from the cloth cover of his helmet which flapped in the wind ; the broken skeletons were the bodies of his slain comrades : the second cavern was the dug-out ; the broken sword a bayonet which broke when he tried to dig his way out with it ; the old men were German prisoners, and the ball of fire was the flash of the explosion.

All this was explained by the patient. If he had been told the probable meaning of the dream he might have believed it ; but the result would have been valueless—it was necessary that he should bring up the memories himself. The dream is unusually coherent, but serves as a good example of the modern methods of dream interpretation.

Half-conscious fears or desires are often represented by symbolisms apparent to the analyst but unrecognised by the dreamer. A man told me of a dream in which he met some one whom he had defeated in a business disagreement, and, to his surprise, he shook hands with his old opponent. I told him that he felt the pricking of conscience and was desirous of making amends.

This was little more than a guess, but its truth was admitted though the dreamer said that he had hardly realised his feelings before. It is characteristic of dreams, as of the slips of the tongue discussed in Chapter I, that there is an obstacle to the dreamer's unaided understanding of them. A simple dream of my own will illustrate this : When going upstairs at a seaside hotel my wife, noticing a stuffed bird, said to me, ' Is that a sea-gull ? ' and I answered ' Yes '. The next morning I remembered a dream for which I could trace no cause, and said to my wife, ' I wonder why I dreamed of my old schoolmaster last night ? ' At this she asked, ' Which one ? ' and when I answered, ' Mr. Gull ', the connection at once became obvious, though something had prevented my seeing the obvious without aid.

Since a dream is a product of dissociation, we expect to find in it the same qualities that belong to the product of other dissociations. The world of the dream is pictured as something external to the dreamer and not arising from his own mind, just as the revelations of automatic writing or the movements of the divining-rod are accepted as coming from some one or something other than the agent.

The dream taps the unconscious, the stories about poets and musicians who rise in the night-watches to pen their elusive inspirations being paralleled by the poetic imagery in the automatic writings of the Glastonbury archæologists.

Lost memories appear in the dream and the

dreamer may deny the incidents, as mentioned in Chapter III. In the same way the apparently honest medium may produce a memory, more or less distorted, as a revelation, and deny that it is a memory.

The dissociated stream is hypersensitive and makes use of hints and fears that have passed unperceived by the consciousness. This use accounts for prophetic dreams, which are, like intuitions, the result of unconscious processes. In my own experience I have known but two circumstantial accounts of dream prophecies which were claimed to be fulfilled: One concerned a railway accident, and the other the destruction by fire of a distant house. Both the dreamers, who were of the male sex, had suffered from gross hysterical manifestations, or, in other words, had been woefully led astray by the unconscious concerning something other than prophecy. Accounts of prophetic dreams must always be suspect because of their origin in the unconscious and the inability of the dreamer either to interpret them or trace their origin. It is to be noted that psychologists who work at dream analysis make no mention of dream prophecies, although the fact that 'the wish is father to the thought' explains why a dream sometimes expresses an unconscious desire that later attains fulfilment in reality.

The Biblical account of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the idol with feet of clay bears the stamp of genuine history. The king, like the neurotic sufferer of to-day, 'dreamed dreams, wherewith

his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.' The magicians, called upon to interpret, asked that the king should first tell his dream; but the king answered, 'The thing is gone from me; if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces and your houses shall be made a dung-hill.' The magicians and astrologers, the sorcerers and the Chaldeans, failed, but the prophet Daniel took up the task and told the king his forgotten dream. We can only imagine his method, but it is possible to revive a dream by using the emotion felt on waking, and such a method, or even direct hypnosis, may have been available to Daniel; and if we regard the interpretation, not as prophetic, but as revealing to the king his forebodings of future disaster, then the chapter accords with modern conceptions of dream analysis. Nebuchadnezzar was already a psycho-neurotic on the borderline of insanity, as his subsequent history shows, and would easily come to rely upon and reward a psychologist like Daniel, who convincingly laid bare to him the working of his unconscious. By tradition the old civilisations of the East were the sources of occult knowledge, and this view of a scrap of Old Testament history gives a hint how the tradition arose. If there existed an esoteric knowledge of psychological technique such as I ascribe to Daniel, then its possessors would easily obtain reputations for more than worldly wisdom.

CHAPTER IX

HYSTERIA

THE word 'hysteria', like 'lunacy', is evidence of a belief now discarded. When the theory of demoniacal possession ceased to satisfy the desire for reasons, and material explanations were sought for certain conditions, it was supposed that the uterus (Greek, *hystera*) came adrift from its position and wandered about the body, producing the condition thenceforward known as hysteria. Advancing knowledge killed this theory, but the influence of the word remained and the disease was attributed to some derangement or irritation of the uterus and its associated organs. Charcot, of Paris, showed the mental origin of hysteria, but, becoming lost in a maze of hypnotism and suggestion, he described as symptoms of the disease various manifestations which were really called up by himself or his assistants. There are medical men who still insist on a bodily cause, but such causes serve merely as pegs on which to hang the symptoms.

As usual, I shrink from a definition, but in this case I have good reason. Every writer who describes hysteria expresses his own ideas about it, and as the ideas of no two writers are alike

some definitions scarcely seem to refer to the same subject.

Here is a definition by Babinski, a French writer of international reputation :—

'Hysteria is a peculiar psychical state capable of giving rise to certain conditions which have features of their own. It manifests itself in primary and secondary symptoms. The former can be exactly reproduced by suggestion in certain subjects and can be made to disappear under the sole influence of suggestion.'

And here is one by Pierre Janet, a man of equal eminence :—

'Hysteria is a form of mental depression characterised by retraction of the field of personal consciousness, and a tendency to complete division of the personality, and subconscious mental conditions grow and form a kind of second personality.'

And here are a few words from Ernest Jones, the chief exponent of Freud's views in this country :—

'It is in the excessive tendency to displace affects by means of superficial associations that the final key to the explanation of abnormal suggestion is to be sought. Even if it were true, which it certainly is not, that most hysterical symptoms are the product of verbal suggestion, the observation would be of hardly any practical or theoretical interest.'

When the reader has finished this chapter he will perhaps return to these definitions, and see how each represents one aspect, and how the best understanding is reached by a consideration of all of them.

The Great War has provided plenty of material for the study of hysteria, and French and German writers have dealt extensively with it. The paucity of English writings on the subject may indicate a smaller amount of material, but there has been sufficient considerably to increase our knowledge. The common form of hysteria is a mimicry of bodily disease ; pains, paralyses, contractions and joint affections most often occur, though fits and trances are typical and there are few diseases which are not imitated. Hysteria therefore has a superficial resemblance to malingering, or the conscious simulation of disease for a definite end, and many people find it hard to conceive any difference between the two. Various criteria have been given to distinguish them, but, in my opinion, when the question arises the distinction can rarely be made upon physical grounds and is chiefly a matter of judgement concerning the honesty of the patient ; that is to say, the hysteric believes in his disease as a reality, but the malingerer knows that it is fictitious. I believe there is no definite line between the groups, though some authorities assert that they are quite distinct. Practical experience proves that in many cases there is an intense desire for cure which cannot be reconciled with any consciousness of simulation, and the apparently heartfelt gratitude often shown by the patient on recovery is further proof of the reality of this desire.

It is a matter for regret that we have no word to take the place of ' hysteria ', which is a mark

of superstition ; the only excuse for its use being that every one knows that it does not mean what it says. Popular and even professional ideas concerning hysteria are so far from the truth that it is a pity a new word is not employed. If a man has fought bravely for years and at last succumbed in his effort to forget the horrors he has seen, it sounds an insult to say he is suffering from hysteria. Yet the newer term of ' shell-shock ' was worse, for it conveyed a totally false idea of causation and treatment : to regard as due to the concussion of a shell symptoms which are of purely mental origin led to muddled thinking.

A common history in these cases was that the man became ' unconscious ' after a shell explosion, and on returning to consciousness found himself mute, shaky, or paralysed. These facts led to the belief that the condition was actually due to the physical effect of an explosion, ' shell-shock ' and ' concussion ' being regarded as almost synonymous. But the same symptoms occurred when there was no question of concussion, whilst the recoveries, often sensationally reported in the press, after accidental or deliberate stimuli of various kinds were on all fours with the cures wrought by Christian Science or the pilgrimage to Lourdes. Hence the hysterical nature of the symptoms became evident and the concussion theory faded away.

When one of these patients is encouraged to talk he often tells how he had felt himself overpowered by the horrors of his surroundings and

forced to make increased efforts to keep going and avoid showing his condition to his fellows—in other words, to repress his emotions. The strain continuing, the shell-burst proved the last straw, and his repressed feelings broke into consciousness and took possession of it ; this is what the man called being ' unconscious ', but the condition is really an abrupt dissociation. In course of time —hours, days, or even weeks—he comes to himself again, and once more his feelings are buried ; but now he is a hysteric, and his buried feelings—his dissociated stream—produce and maintain his symptoms.

In whatever way the hysteria arises the developed symptoms are the result of a mental activity which is powerful enough to overcome for a long time the desire for recovery. There are two streams of thought—the one desirous of cure and the other engaged in keeping up the symptoms—and we recognise an extreme example of continuous dissociation, in which the main stream is not only unaware of the existence of the other and unable to control it, but in which the results produced by the dissociated stream are antagonistic to the desires of the main personality.

This conception accords fairly well with Janet's definition as given above, but though it gives us a description of the disease and indicates its relation to other phenomena we have yet to understand why the dissociation occurs. This is a difficult problem, and one to which several answers can be given. I have suggested one above, and

Freud supplies another, which he applies not only to hysteria but to allied nervous conditions. What follows is not an exposition of his ideas, but rather my interpretation of such as are acceptable and useful to me. A complex, which according to Freud usually centres around an infantile sexual desire, is repugnant to the consciousness and becomes repressed as a result of conflict in just the same way as a memory is repressed. The complex is kept thrust down in the unconscious, but always tends to produce effects ; it may do so in dreams or may obtain symbolic representation in the form of a neurosis, especially in times of stress. Besides the primary aim of expressing repression by a symbolic representation, Freud admits a ' secondary function ' of the neurosis by which the patient may derive some advantage from the disease.

Here is a case capable of explanation by the Freudian hypothesis : A man said he had fallen on to the blade of an aeroplane propeller and bruised his neck ; he complained of severe pain in one side of his neck, with twitching of the arm on the same side, which continued for months. It was found that the patient, who was apprenticed to engineering, had such a deep-seated fear of making mistakes that he had sometimes stayed at the workshop for hours after the day's work was over in order to familiarise himself with the use of tools ; but in spite of this his fear increased, until the handling of a file or spanner produced feelings of anxiety. Then he joined the army.

Being put to work at aeroplanes he tried to do his duty and succeeded so far as to be made a corporal, saying never a word about his fears and banishing them as far as possible from his thoughts. At last the repression broke forth and took symbolic form in pain, the expression of his fear of the machinery which was blamed as its material cause. No account can picture the emotion produced by the recall of this complex, and it was evident that his feelings were intense and of more importance to him than one unfamiliar with such cases would suppose. His pains ceased when the cause had been revealed, and, what is very important, when he was told that he could not be expected to work at machinery. It must be added that the out-and-out Freudian would not be satisfied with this explanation ; he would trace the cause of the original fear of making mistakes, and would expect to find it in some repression of infantile desires or fears. Certainly I have a feeling that the case had only been half investigated, but it will serve as a simple example of symbolic representation.

The 'secondary function' of this neurosis is plain : the patient succeeded in keeping away from machinery all the time the pain lasted, and his anxiety symptoms were powerful enough to lead to his removal to another kind of work.

This leads on to Adler's theory,[1] which, like Freud's, is based upon conflict and repression, but regards the hysteria as derived from the

[1] *The Neurotic Constitution.* Kegan Paul.

'Will to Power'. The potential neurotic has a feeling of inferiority combined with a desire to be master of his own fate, and, since direct attainment of this desire is impossible, the end is striven for by a fantasy or fiction produced by the unconscious. This view, thus baldly put, shows a relation between hysteria and malingering, and, returning to the case of the prentice engineer, we can see his work in the shop becoming more and more distasteful whilst his anxiety tended to become a means of escape; then in the army the neurosis took a more determined form which might be confounded with malingering by an observer who assumed that all actions were the result of conscious motives.

My present opinion is that the theory of repression offers the only explanation of many cases of hysteria. This applies particularly to those cases where the symptoms represent a permanent state of embarrassment or fear, such as stammers and tremors, and to the unreasonable fears and impulses, the phobias and obsessions, of the war-strained soldier. As an example I will quote a case of a soldier who had an impulse to attack any single companion, which was cured by bringing into consciousness the repressed memory of a gruesome hand-to-hand fight in which he killed his opponent. The repression was so complete that after its first revival under hypnosis it was 'forgotten' again and again at subsequent interviews in the waking state. This example illustrates Freud's 'tendency to displace affects.' The

repressed complex contained within itself the impulse to fight ; this ' affect ' reached consciousness and an object had to be found for it, the object being the single companion of the patient.

As regards those hysterias in which the secondary function is conspicuous, I incline to the ' Will to Power ' theory, and add to it the ' repression of the consciousness of deceit.' To illustrate this, let us trace the growth of a case of hysteria. Imagine a girl who is ' misunderstood ', who has her round of daily tasks and feels that she was meant for higher things, that she ought to be loved and obeyed instead of being subject to the will of others. To no one can she tell her thoughts and troubles, sympathy is denied her, and she sees no hope of satisfying her desires or changing her position in the world.

Or imagine another type, the pampered girl who has never had to face a trouble or unpleasant task and has come to regard her own wishes as the supreme law, until at last the time comes when some desire, some wish that she cannot or will not face and conquer, remains ungratified. She feels the need to express her feelings, to obtain that sympathy that she thinks she deserves.

In either case there comes the hysterical manifestation, and here I will quote from Jung [1] :—

' But, the astonished reader asks, what is supposed to be the use of the neurosis ? What does it effect ? Whoever has had a pronounced case of neurosis in his immediate

[1] Loc. cit., p. 389.

environment knows all that can be "effected" by a neurosis. In fact there is altogether no better means of tyrannising over a whole household than by a striking neurosis. Heart attacks, choking fits, convulsions of all kinds achieve enormous effects, that can hardly be surpassed. Picture the fountains of pity let loose, the sublime anxiety of the dear kind parents, the hurried running to and fro of the servants, the incessant sounding of the call of the telephone, the hasty arrival of the physicians, the delicacy of the diagnosis, the detailed examinations, the lengthy courses of treatment, the considerable expense: and there in the midst of all the uproar, lies the innocent sufferer to whom the household is even overflowingly grateful, when he has recovered from the "spasms".[3]

But the end is not always thus. There are victims of hysteria whose symptoms continue for months or years, till cure seems impossible, although, as I have said before in this chapter, there is present in the consciousness a strong desire for recovery. Let us imagine the patient complaining of severe pain in one foot: the sympathising friends tend her with care and affection, the doctor suspects the early stage of some bone disease, and, as is the fate of so many practitioners, he is urged by the friends to say 'what is the matter.' Then the supposed disease receives a name, muscular action pulls the foot into an abnormal position, deformity appears, and if the true nature of the disease is now discovered not only the patient but the friends and family need the most careful treatment.

What has been happening all this time in the mind of the patient? We will assume that she

knew at the beginning that her pains were fictitious ; what course is now open to her if she wishes to end the deceit when her friends, by their pardonable credulity, have allowed themselves to be deceived and her troubles have been accepted by the doctor as real ? Her pride or self-respect prevents open confession, and in her ignorance of the course of the supposed disease she thinks an unexpected recovery will reveal the fraud. Here are the materials for another mental conflict, and her alternatives are :—

1. To solve the conflict by confession or recovery, and I have shown the difficulties of this course.

2. To build a logic-tight compartment ; to say, for example, ' They have never given me a chance, and now I am quite right in imposing upon them as long as I can.' But her feelings concerning right and wrong are probably too strong to maintain this attitude indefinitely.

3. To repress the consciousness of deceit and maintain her symptoms as the price of her peace of mind.

This last course is followed, and the patient is now a Dissociate. In the dissociated stream are :—

1. The original desires which led to the manifestation of disease—the desire for sympathy, the desire to have her own way, the ' Will to Power.'

2. The knowledge of deceit.

3. The mechanism for maintaining the symptoms—the pains, the paralysis or contracture.

This stream is now independent of the main personality and out of its control ; as far as the patient knows her pains are real, her deformity is a disease, and whoever doubts it is not only ignorant but cruel. We can now understand the capriciousness of the hysteric, her moods and contrary ways. On the one side is a mind with ordinary motives, and on the other is the split-off portion containing the complexes catalogued above. If the reader thinks this conception brings us back to the old one of demoniacal possession I will admit that the only difference lies in the definition of the demon.

The description of this imagined case will perhaps be acceptable to those who believe in the connection between hysteria and malingering. This connection I at one time emphasised, and I still believe that in some cases the repression of a knowledge of deceit plays an important part in the development of the disease. But motives are derived more or less from the unconscious, and when the unconscious elements predominate we approach the condition in which there has never existed any consciousness of deceit. The case of the soldier with an obsession to attack his companion does not admit of the hypothesis of a stage in which the symptom was due to a conscious desire to any end : but his repression might have shown itself, let us suppose, in a paralysis of his legs as a symbol of exhaustion or terror. Then we should have a hysteria in which there had never been any deceit complex, though in the absence

of knowledge of the workings of the patient's mind a firm believer in the ' Will to Power ' theory might attribute the origin of the condition to a definite desire to escape the strain of war.

I can now state that some of the results of conflict between desire and reality form a graduated series, beginning at cases of conscious simulation, then passing on to those of hysteria with repression of the knowledge of deceit, and ending with cases where deceit has never existed ; but no one theory explains satisfactorily the origin of all cases of hysteria.

It is difficult to understand those cases in which the hysteric inflicts injuries upon him or herself ; the individual who thrusts needles into his body and comes to hospital again and again to have them removed is a curious but not very uncommon object. An ophthalmic surgeon of my acquaintance had a patient who placed irritants under the lid of one eye till the sight was lost and the organ was removed, and the process was begun on the remaining eye before the trick was discovered. Such things occur in the history of malingering, and what the consciousness can do the dissociated stream is equally capable of doing : the only difficulty is the very practical one of believing that the patient can carry out the necessary action without being fully aware of what is happening, unless we assume an abrupt dissociation with the main personality temporarily abolished.

Certain hypnotic experiments throw light upon this difficulty, which also occurs in connection

with some spiritualist phenomena. It has for long been disputed whether mental processes can produce bleeding into the skin or blisters upon it. Such bleedings were the 'stigmata' representing the marks of the Crucifixion, that have been described as appearing upon the bodies of religious devotees, and they have been thought to be real and due in some way to auto-suggestion.

Hysterical subjects often show the production of raised wheals if the skin is lightly stroked with the finger-nail or the head of a needle ; one can write a word upon the skin and watch it become visible. This is purely a circulatory phenomenon, but experiments have been made under hypnosis in which the skin is touched with a pencil and the subject is told that he is being burnt and that a blister will follow. Success has been claimed for this experiment, but one source of error is hard to exclude. If a blister appears the next day, and the subject is known to be an honest man with no end to gain by cooking the experiment, an observer might be inclined to accept the result as due to the direct influence of suggestion ; but the subject is, by the terms of the experiment, in a state of dissociation, and in the dissociated personality exists the suggestion that a blister should appear. In addition there exists the desire to carry out the wishes of the hypnotist, and since this is out of the control of the main personality whose honesty is accepted as sufficient guarantee against fraud he must nevertheless be regarded as willing and eager to produce a blister.

Milne Bramwell [1] quotes a case in which suggestion, under stringent conditions, apparently produced blistering: the subject's arm was then enveloped in bandages in which sheets of paper were incorporated, and after further suggestion and a night's rest it was found that, although the subject had been watched continually, she had succeeded in penetrating the bandages with a hair-pin. A further experiment, in which the arm was enveloped in plaster of Paris bandage, gave a negative result. This experiment is very valuable; it does not disprove the possibility of producing blisters by suggestion, but it does prove that if we judge the Dissociate by ordinary standards we expose ourselves to victimisation. If I were the subject of such an experiment I should certainly require that every precaution should be taken to prevent me from producing a blister by mechanical means.

Now let us consider the signs of the disease. In the chapter on suggestion I showed that in a limb paralysed by hysteria the loss of sensitiveness, the so-called hysterical anæsthesia, resulted from a desire on the part of the patient that the doctor should find what he was looking for, and this desire I called receptivity. The receptivity is at first necessary to keep up the deception, for the patient does not know the symptoms of the simulated disease, and must always be on the alert to pick up hints. When dissociation occurs, the receptivity finds its place in the split-off stream,

[1] *Hypnotism*, 3rd ed., 1913. Wm. Rider & Son.

forming part of the mechanism for keeping up the symptoms; but having passed out of the control of the main personality it tends to become exaggerated and misdirected.

Hence the hysteric becomes very suggestible and all kinds of fantastic symptoms may be produced. If the resistance to recovery is not great then suggestion may even remove symptoms, just as it created them; and if we now turn back to Babinski's definition we shall find that it fits into our theories, although it concerns itself with only a restricted view of the subject.

Since one object of the dissociated stream is to maintain the symptoms, it follows that any method that will remove them may abolish the dissociation, though still leaving the patient with those desires and conflicts, conscious or unconscious, which preceded their appearance and which form the so-called 'hysterical predisposition'. This explains the success which has followed the employment of exorcism, Christian Science, nasty drugs, cold water, electric shocks, persuasion, or rest cures; and to this list, I hasten to admit, some people would add treatment according to the method of bringing repressions into the light of consciousness.

I have tried to make clear the subject of hysteria for the following reasons: There is at the present day no school of believers desirous of attributing supernatural causes to the disease, and therefore I am spared the task of attacking a mass of credulity; and, further, the mental processes are

identical with those shown in other phenomena concerning which credulity is still powerful. I can now proceed to show how the theory of dissociation explains the production of the spuriously supernatural by the apparently honest.

CHAPTER X

EXPERIMENTS, DOMESTIC AND OTHER

THERE are certain parlour tricks which have an attractive flavour of the occult and sometimes form an introduction to it. Most of us have seen children mystified by a thought-reading performance depending upon a more or less obvious code, but sometimes we are treated to one which is more genuine.

The procedure is something like this : One person goes out of the room and the others decide that on his return he shall perform an action such as unlacing a shoe or pushing on the hands of a clock to a certain hour. Then he returns and, according to arrangement, may be blindfolded or not, and one of the party may or may not place a hand upon his shoulder ; the audience next ' concentrate their minds ' upon what the performer is to do, whilst he ' makes his mind a blank'.

Sometimes success follows, and the result is taken as proof of ' thought-reading '.

Now let us examine the process in the light of what we have assumed n previous chapters. To make the mind a blank, if it means anything, means to cut off the stream of consciousness, and we straightway have our old friend a dissociation.

The performer is then in a state resembling hypnosis, and, as we have seen before, in hypnosis the senses may be abnormally sharpened. This sharpness, together with the receptivity of the subject, makes him ready to pick up the faintest signs, and in the case where the hand of a second person, also concentrating his mind on the desired action and therefore to a certain extent dissociated, is placed upon his shoulder, there are easily conveyed enough pressure-signs to indicate when he is going right or wrong.

When there is no actual contact other indications than touch are not lacking. The passing expressions of pleasure or disappointment on the faces of the audience, the sigh of relief when a wrong step is retraced, the glances at the object to be handled, are all picked up by the dissociated stream whilst the main personality of the subject is for the time almost obliterated. We must bear in mind that all the audience are concentrating their minds, that concentration of mind upon an action is likely to be followed by movements corresponding to the action, and that no one is watching his neighbour or suspects any such unconscious indications.

The thought-reading is not performed without prolonged pauses, the subject making several halting steps before the right one is taken. It reminds one of the manner in which the medium feels his way to the thoughts of his victims.

Domestic blindfolding is not very efficient, and may be of use to the subject by allowing him to

look without the direction of his glances being noticed.

So this thought-reading is reduced to the children's game of 'Hot and Cold', but instead of fully conscious people producing and receiving sounds we have a group of 'concentrated' (that is, partly dissociated) streams sending out indications to be picked up by a hypersensitive dissociated stream.

The subject is often exhausted by his efforts, and the performance is not likely to be of benefit to any one who misinterprets it. The human mind contains enough errors without producing a voluntary dissociation further to deceive its owner.

There is one well-known experiment the significance of which is generally missed. If the reader is not familiar with it let him follow these directions and he will probably find that he is possessed of some amount of so-called hypnotic power. Having procured a weight fastened to a short cord (a heavy watch with its chain will serve), direct a friend to sit in a chair and, resting his elbows upon his knees, to hold the cord by the fingers of both hands so that the weight is suspended between his separated knees. Let him keep his eyes upon the weight and assure him that it will begin to swing from knee to knee. The weight, at first indecisively wobbling, will soon take on the swing you describe, which will gradually increase in amplitude. I have heard people ascribe this motion to 'magnetic power'—blessed words that mean nothing, but serve to give an

appearance of reason to an explanation that should satisfy no one.

The real cause of the motion is shown if you experiment with a fresh subject, who must know nothing of the first trial. Ask him to hold the weight in the same manner but, standing in front of him, tell him the weight will swing towards you (that is, at right angles to its swing in the first experiment). If you show sufficient assurance you will probably succeed in both experiments, but your chance of success is less than that of the man who has seen the trick and accepts the ' magnetic ' explanation, for his belief in the physical cause of the phenomenon will give him a natural assurance which is lacking in one who realises that the weight swings in a certain direction because the agent is made to believe that it will.

It is plain that your friend swings the weight himself, but he is unaware of two factors : He knows nothing of his own muscular action and nothing of his own mental processes which have produced that action ; hence this experiment must be placed among the automatisms like table-turning and water-divining. One is prepared to find that the trick has its place among the mechanical adjuncts of spiritualism : it was used in ancient times as a means of divination, and is used by mediums of to-day when they tap out spirit revelations with a gold ring suspended in a glass tumbler.

If intelligent people like your friends can be made to believe that the weight is moved by some extraneous force, it can be understood that the

trained medium, full of a belief in the supernatural, finds it an easy task to let the unconscious have possession of his or her muscular actions and spell out memories and fantasies which one is asked to accept as evidence of spirit control.

Planchette (described in Chapter IV) finds a place in the family circle, sometimes with the result that a single hit becomes a tradition after all the other stuff has faded from memory. A friend, who told me that he saw Planchette predict truly the month in which the Boer War ended, admitted that his family had toyed with the instrument night after night, but he failed to remember any other results. I must add that he never believed in the thing, but, nevertheless, the one lucky shot was remembered.

Table-turning is another half-way house between the parlour trick and the full-blown occult. Several people sit round a light table with their hands placed upon it, and, after due 'concentration of mind', aided often by a dim light, the table begins to move and the spirits are at work. Then a sort of Morse code is invented to communicate with the spirit entities, and the revelations begin.

Here I will quote from page 219 of *Raymond*, that widely-circulated book by Sir Oliver Lodge :—

'During the half-hour . . . I had felt every now and then a curious tingling in my hands and fingers, and then a much stronger drawing sort of feeling through my hands and arms, which caused the table to have a strange intermittent trembling sort of feeling, though it was not a movement of

the *whole* table. . . . Nearly every time I felt these queer movements Lady Lodge asked, " Did you move, Woodie ?" . . . Lady Lodge said it must be due to nerves or muscles, or something of the sort.'

Compare this with the feelings of the water-diviner (Chapter V) :—

' The muscles of the arm become contracted when the bodily magnetism is affected by the presence of water. . . . I suppose it must have something to do with the composition of the blood and nerve cells.'

Or with those of a hysteric who, previously relieved from mutism, was again struck dumb during a thunderstorm : . . . ' I felt the electricity passing all over my body ; it made all my muscles quiver and then went out at my finger-tips.'

No one can deny the reality of these feelings, as feelings, but in the first instance they are due to spirits, and in the next to water, and only in the case of the man known to be sick in mind is the real explanation likely to be accepted by the subject. They are all products of imagination, suggestion, self-deceit, or dissociation—call it what you please if you understand that the feelings have their origin in the mind of the subject and are not due to any external cause.

But in the first two examples they are associated with muscular movements which, we must believe, are carried out unknown to the doers and hence have their source in a dissociated stream. As usual, once the dissociation is established, there is

no limit to its manifestations. Picture three or four Dissociates at work at a table, all bent upon producing signs of the marvellous, all blind to the mechanism at work, and with the hypersensitiveness of the dissociated stream ready to draw on the memories of the unconscious.

Mixed with this is the possibility of more elaborate deceit : when the hands of all are raised from the table their knees may still be under it ; and if the knees are clear of it a blackened lath concealed up a sleeve can still work miracles.

This is taking us beyond the purely domestic, but there is no difference between the after-dinner tilting of the table for amusement and the same thing done at a séance—the mechanism is the same, but one is treated as a jest whilst the other is something worse. We see again the typical series with simple trickery at one end and reason-destroying dissociation at the other.

Palmistry seems too absurd to be discussed, but it is another half-way house. That the lines of Life, or Love, or what-not, are to be found on the palms of dead-born babies and of monkeys should be enough to stop the cult ; but handbooks of palmistry seem to profit their publishers, and the palmists and clairvoyants flourish. The girl who buys a handbook and amuses her friends by reading their hands is comparatively harmless, though even she, becoming shrewd to note when she hits the mark, is likely to develop an unconscious receptivity and drift into fraud.

Crystal-gazing is a form of mediumism admirably

fitted to give play both to trickery and dissociation. Used by the medium to 'see as in a glass darkly' and gain time for the help of his or her receptivity, it also allows of the induction of a self-hypnosis, the memories or fancies from the unconscious showing themselves as visions in the crystal.

Table-turning is easily first among the ways of giving rein to the unconscious. It has the advantage of allowing several people to play the same game at once, and further of allowing one Dissociate to work the miracle, whilst no one, not even the Dissociate himself, knows who is doing it. This is illustrated in *The New Revelation*, p. 19, where Sir Arthur says: 'Some one, then, was moving the table; I thought it was they. They probably thought that I did it.'

The Gate of Remembrance [1] gives an illustration of tapping the unconscious and producing results that seem astonishing.

Two gentlemen, Mr. F. B. Bond and his friend J. A. I., had devoted years of study to the archæology of Glastonbury, exploring every available source of information in history or tradition and thinking hard and often about the Edgar Chapel, a part of the Abbey whose site was undetermined. After this preparatory storing up of memories and thoughts in the unconscious, they proceeded to tap them. I quote from page 18:—

'What was clear enough was the need of somehow switching off the mere logical machinery of the brain which is for ever at work combining the

[1] By F. B. Bond; Blackwell, Oxford.

more superficial and obvious things written on the pages of memory, and by its dominant activity excluding that which a more contemplative element in the mind would seek to revive from the half-obliterated traces below.'

Recognising an old friend, we are not surprised to find that automatic writing was the means employed to switch off the main stream of consciousness and produce a dissociation.

I find myself more in accord with the writer than reviews had led me to expect, for he disclaims 'the action of discarnate intelligences from the outside upon the physical or nervous organisation of the sitters' (p. 19).

The automatic writing is apparently controlled by Richard Bere, Johannes, and other influences which would be welcomed by spiritualists as 'objective entities'; but the writer gives his opinion regarding Johannes (p. 50) as follows: 'Whether we are dealing with a singularly vivid imaginative picture or with the personality of a man no one can really decide.'

Here I must differ and claim to have decided, for myself at least, that no personality other than that of the actual writer was concerned. The record of hysterical phenomena contains so many similar 'personalities' that I find no reason to call in the supernatural to account for this one. If a natural explanation is available we must not appeal to the supernatural; I am sure that F. B. B. is not unacquainted with Occam's razor—miracles must not be unnecessarily multiplied.

Since the writer does not stress the supernatural, and allows me to credit to his unconscious the poetical imaginings produced in the script and the ' veridical passages ' concerning the discoveries of the Edgar Chapel, I have no need to criticise them, especially as he is scrupulous in giving credit to the conscious predictions of others when they hit the mark.

The book is a record of an experiment—successful from the psychological point of view—carried out by two Dissociates who *knew what they were doing ;* the dissociated streams were entirely out of their control, and although I must, from the psychological standpoint, class the experiment with the other dissociations described in this book, yet it is far from my purpose to class the experimenters with ' Feda ' and others of her kind.

The earlier chapters of this book were written before I read *The Gate of Remembrance*, but whoever reads the conclusion in the latter book will find many opinions in agreement with those in my chapter on the unconscious.

Table-turning, water-divining, automatic writing, thought-reading, and the use of the pendulum are examples of a psychological automatism in which the agent is conscious neither of the muscular movements concerned nor, what is more important, of the mental processes producing them.

They can be cultivated to provide amazing results in tapping the memories of the unconscious, and if the agents remain in ignorance of their true mechanism a systematised delusion is built up and accepted as proof of the supernatural.

CHAPTER XI

ABOUT MEDIUMS

JUST as any one believing all actions to be the result of fully conscious motives may regard the hysteric as a simple fraud, so he may dismiss the medium and the clairvoyant in the same easy way and consider the matter settled. But we find men in positions which lend authority not only vouching for the honesty of the medium but sometimes taking an active part in the production of the phenomena for which the explanation of fraud is regarded as sufficient ; as a result this explanation fails to convince and we meet many people who believe there must be ' something in it '. So there is : there is the same graduated series, from the simple cheat to the complete Dissociate, that we saw in the consideration of hysteria, but in addition there is a fervent desire to believe, and the Dissociate, instead of being regarded as a victim of disease, is treated as a person gifted with supernatural powers.

Let me describe my first experience of a medium. Friends had told me of his gifts and had met my incredulity with ' How do you explain this ? ' followed by some story of supernatural revelation. I could not explain, but accepted an invitation to

meet the miracle-worker and, perhaps, be converted. His method of demonstrating communication with the spirit world was to sit in a meditative attitude with one hand before his eyes, whilst watching between his slightly separated fingers the assembled believers so as to note the effect of his revelations, which were apparently presented to him by the spirits in two forms. Descriptions of the spirit world came through freely, one might call them fluent but incoherent, whilst revelations such as my friends had promised came in a halting and uncertain trickle. The enthusiastic accounts had not prepared me for such a poor show. I had pictured him saying something like—' Your grandmother's name was Georgina ; she died at the age of seventy-two, after an illness lasting three days ; she was a good horsewoman and disliked Mr. Gladstone '. Instead of this the procedure was : ' I hear a name, is it George ? (No bite)—Georgina ? (a look of intelligence)—you have a friend named Georgina—a young girl—no, not a young girl, she was older, a relative, yes, a relative '—and so on. Finally Georgina is discovered to be a grandmother of one of those present, and is described sufficiently well to be recognised as the grandmother on the father's side, though, curiously, Georgina was the name of the maternal grandmother. What could be more convincing ? Of course spirit communication is difficult and such a mistake only proves the genuineness of the article ; but the description of the grandmother was built up on certain characteristics of the father, who was present, and the

source was obvious to any one not blinded by the desire to believe.

One incident shows that the medium had received some education in the superficial signs of disease. An elderly lady with a rather puffy face, which had raised in me a suspicion of kidney disease, was told by him : ' It is strange, but I *must* tell you for your own sake. You have trouble with your kidneys.' He was wrong and so was I, but if events had proved us right the credit would have been his.

Then my turn came and the spirits told about my own disposition, which I had unfortunately revealed by a single observation before the real business began, and the exulting glances of the audience told me the first score had gone to the medium. Then more intimate stuff came through ; names were presented and I nibbled at one : ' Yes, I know him ', with a stress on the ' I '. More revelations—he was my enemy (here a nod from me), I had suspected it for a long time, but right would conquer, and I must not fear. Then a relative came into the play, and a look of sadness drew forth the surprising news that she was dead but her spirit was watching over me. Next came the phrase, heard once before in the séance, ' I see a far-off land ', and the believers brightened up again. Quick came the news, ' You have been abroad,' and I couldn't deny it.

Thus the game went on ; when a hint could be picked up it was used at once or later, to be cast back as a spirit revelation. As the game developed

I gave hints in plenty, whilst my friends showed their joy at seeing a sceptic receive convincing proofs of the spirit powers.

The séance being ended, my first task was to persuade the believers that the revelations vouchsafed to me bore little relation to the truth ; 'But you said they were true.' 'Yes, and they were not.' 'Then you were really telling lies.' 'Yes, and he believed them and so did the spirits.' 'Well, of course, if you deceive the spirits like that how can you expect the truth in return ?' So the rationalisations went on and the logic-tight compartments were protected from injury.

In this show we see a fine example of receptivity, like that of the hysteric who watches the doctor to learn what symptoms he expects to find ; and just as the doctor may suggest absurd symptoms and find them present, so I was able to suggest falsehoods and have them reflected as revelations. But the believer would never do that ; he is eager to fit every phrase to some fact within his knowledge, those that cannot be so fitted being forgotten as soon as the next lucky shot occurs, and in his eagerness he helps along the medium and provides him with more material.

Lest it may be thought that this experience is not typical, I will use the light given by it to examine some of the spirit news given in *Raymond*.

But we must first understand who are the *dramatis personæ* of a séance. Since the time of

the Witch of En-dor the expert medium has had a familiar spirit which speaks through him to this world and at the same time is in contact with the spirit world. The psychological explanation, if the medium is a true Dissociate and not a conscious fraud, is that the results of the dissociated stream are perceived by its owner as something of external origin. In the same way a lunatic whose dissociated stream produces voices will project them externally and believe them to be warnings or commands from an outside source ; the table - turners, water - diviners, and watch-swingers follow the same reasoning, though their results are purely motor ; and when ideas come up from the cut-off stream the individual cannot recognise them as mental products of his own, but feels impelled to credit them to another personality. I am reminded of a charming little girl whose one desire was to please her parents but who often gave way to the mischievous tendencies of a healthy child ; whenever that happened she produced an imaginary ' Naughty John ' who broke toys and cut off little girls' hair. That is how the dissociated medium proceeds : unable to rate at their proper value the ideas which present themselves, he invents a familiar spirit who serves as their ostensible origin. The familiar thus called into being can draw upon the unconscious of the medium for the material to build up fantasies about another world. The spirits of the dead are part of these fantasies, so that we finally have the medium, the medium's split-off personality,

often with a name of its own, and the spirit that meets the demand of the moment.

The secondary personalities in Sir Oliver's mediums are Feda and Moonstone, and in the dialogue Feda tells what Raymond is doing or saying, occasionally carrying on asides of her own. All this seems very complicated, but an explanation is necessary in order to understand what follows.

The medium (or, in this case, Feda) tells Sir Oliver Lodge (see pp. 250 *et seq.*), 'It's a browny-coloured earth, not nice green, but sandy-coloured ground. As Feda looks at the land, the ground rises sharp at the back. Must have been made to rise, it sticks up in the air. . . . The raised up land is at the back of the tent, well set back. It doesn't give an even sticking up, but it goes right along, with bits sticking up and bits lower down.' Of this the scientific Sir Oliver says: 'The description of the scenery showed plainly that it was Woolacombe sands that was meant.' The reader will have no difficulty in fitting this description to any sands he likes, but the believer wants it to be Woolacombe, and Woolacombe it is.

Then, the medium having discovered that O. J. L.'s family had a tent by the water, O. J. L. asks: 'Is it all one chamber in the tent?' Answer: 'He didn't say that. He was going to say no, and then he stopped to think. No, I don't think it was, it was divided off.'

Next a yacht appears out of the spirit world, and O. J. L. asks: 'What about the yacht with sails, did it run on the water?' The medium needs

time to think, and the answer comes : ' No ' (Feda (*sotto voce*) : Oh, Raymond ! don't be silly !) he says, ' No. (Feda : It must have done.) He is showing Feda like a thing on land—yes, a land thing. It's standing up, like edgeways. A narrow thing. No, it isn't water, but it has got nice white sails.'

O. J. L. ' Did it go along ? '

' He says it *didn't* ! He's laughing ! When he said " didn't " he shouted it.' Feda should have said, ' He laid particular emphasis on it.'

The first question is capable of two interpretations and the answer is ambiguous, though the ambiguity is further ' evidence ' to Sir Oliver, because he remembers that a double-chamber tent had been turned into a single-chamber one.

The second question may be compared with ' Did you feel that ? ' in the production of hysterical anæsthesia (see Chapter VIII). The hysteric reasons, consciously or unconsciously :—It is natural to feel a pin prick, but the doctor is looking for signs of disease and he must expect to find a numbness or he wouldn't ask the question, so the answer is ' no '.

When Sir Oliver asks concerning a yacht, ' Did it run on the water ? ' the reasoning is similar, and the word ' run ' helps, for no yacht runs on the water ; if the yacht sailed on the water the question would not be asked, therefore the answer here was ' no ', but the medium maintained a clever ambiguity whilst feeling her way.

The third answer was a cleaner guess, but wrong.

He says : ' All this about the tent and boat is

excellent, though not outside my knowledge' . . . . Then he adds, concerning the boat, 'I believe it went along the sands very fast occasionally, but it still wouldn't sail at right angles to the wind as they wanted it. . . . On the whole it was regarded as a failure, the wheels were too small; and Raymond's "didn't" is quite accepted.'

And Raymond's 'did' would have been as readily accepted and put in the same chapter headed 'Two evidential sittings.'

Contrast these halting scraps to the following (p. 249): 'He wants to tell you that Mr. Myers says that in ten years from now the world will be a different place. He says that about fifty per cent. of the civilised portion of the globe will be either spiritualists or coming into it.'

No hesitation here, but no possible verification either, nor any hint that a hundred per cent. of the uncivilised people of the globe are already spiritualists.

Sir Oliver's imagination does not keep pace with his readiness to fit revelation to fact. After the tent, the water, and the yacht, comes—'rods and things, long rods. Some have got little round things shaking on them like that. And he's got strings, some have got strings. "Strings" isn't the right word, but it will do. Smooth, strong, string-like.'

Of this Sir Oliver says: 'The rod and rings and strings mentioned after the "boat", I don't at present understand. So far as I have ascertained the boys don't understand either at present.'

Surely an out-of-door family like this includes at least one fisherman ; why not think out who he is and score another bull's-eye to the medium ?

A delightful example of Sir Oliver's anxiety to help the medium occurs on page 256 :—

O. J. L. : ' Do you remember a bird in our garden ? '

(Feda (*sotto voce*) : ' Yes, hopping about ').

O. J. L. : ' No, Feda, a big bird.'

' Of course not sparrows, he says. Yes he does.' (Feda (*sotto voce*) : Did he hop, Raymond ?)

' No, he says you couldn't call it a hop.'

This book of Sir Oliver Lodge's shows an honesty which, together with the circumstances under which it was written, makes critical examination difficult ; but there are similar circumstances in many a household to-day, and the honesty of the writer leads many people, who reason that what an eminent man honestly believes must be true, to turn to a mind-wrecking belief in mediums instead of finding consolation in a saner philosophy or religion.

At my first séance it strained my belief in human intelligence to find respected friends believing the romances and guesses of a trickster to be spiritual manifestations, and I thought that there must at least be a more elaborate type of deceit, since believers were to be found among our scientific aristocracy. My belief is no longer strained, but broken, for I find in Sir Oliver's medium the same tricks, the receptivity, the halting search for material, and the same easy flow of unverifiable

revelations that characterised the medium I first met.

Thanks to his honesty, one is able from the material supplied by this writer to trace the source of many 'revelations', and in the rare examples where the source is not manifest (as in the 'pedestal' incident, p. 257) it is scarcely unfair to presume some unintentional suppression. I say unintentional because Sir Oliver, blind to the explanations his own book offers, is plainly incapable of wilfully suppressing facts that tell against himself.

Spiritualism has its fashions, apparitions and materialisations having now given place to communications with the dead, which is the 'New Revelation'. Its newness is not so apparent when we read the story of the Witch of En-dor. Even the occasional deportation of undesirable mediums is not new, for Saul 'put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land' (1 Samuel, chap. xxviii.). When he disguised himself to visit the witch she recognised him just as the mediums recognise Sir Oliver; but the modern resemblance is best seen when we read that Saul, after asking for Samuel, 'said unto her, what form is he of? and she said, an old man cometh up, and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel.'

Here we see the medium giving to the credulous believer just what he wants, and the believer reaching out to accept the trivial guess as a spirit revelation. But the remoteness of the event (even at the time the account was written) allowed

of prophecies far more to the point than any modern medium's, though, as often happens nowadays, their fulfilment was described by the same writer that reported them.

In one respect we have degenerated since the days of Saul ; the Witch of En-dor was not hailed as an instrument of divine power destined to provide a new driving force for religion.

CHAPTER XII

THE ACCOUNTS OF BELIEVERS

ONE is repeatedly faced with a story of the marvellous and invited to explain it away or believe in the supernatural. My favourite way of dealing with such a proposition is to borrow a pack of cards, invite the story-teller to take a card, and, without letting me see it, to think of it whilst holding my hand. After a silent pause I name the card and may be told, 'of course that's a trick', and on assuring my friends that the spirits have told me the name of the card I am called a scoffer; somehow a pack of cards is not spiritual enough.

Some stories are hard to explain without full evidence, and here is one of them: A friend assured me that in *Raymond* was an account of how one of Sir Oliver Lodge's family went to London to visit a medium, and how after she had started some others of the family met in Birmingham, and, calling up the spirit of Raymond, asked him to say 'Honolulu' at the London séance. Sure enough at the London séance held on the same day 'Honolulu' came into the spirit talk. This account is substantially correct (see pp. 271

et seq.) and the incident is inexplicable so far ; Sir Oliver Lodge says of the episode :—

'1. It establishes a reality about the home sittings.
2. It so entirely eliminates anything of the nature of collusion, conscious or unconscious.
3. The whole circumstances of the test make it an exceedingly good one.'

Then, after suggesting Telepathy as an explanation, he writes : 'I venture to say there is no normal explanation, since in my judgement chance is out of the question.'

If the information had stopped at this no explanation on natural lines would be possible, but so painfully honest is Sir Oliver that in the same book he supplies full material for such an explanation. At a London séance on December 20th, 1915, with the same medium there occurs the following :—

(Question) : 'What used he to sing ?'
(Answer) : 'Hello-Hullolo, sounds like Hullulu-Hullulo, something about "Hottentot," but he is going back a long way he thinks.'

On April 11th, 1916, a song of Raymond's is found with the words written in pencil :—

'Any little flower from a tulip to a rose
If you'll be Mrs. John James Brown
Of Hon-o-lu-la-lu-la town.'

This song is fitted to the medium's revelations as given above, and the next point of interest is whether the medium is informed of her success. This we are not told, but we find on page 95 that when another medium had hit the mark, with a

sentence now interpreted as a warning of the death of Raymond before it took place, Sir Oliver wrote to the daughter of the medium : ' The reference to the Poet and Faunus in your mother's last script is quite intelligible, and a good classical allusion ; you might tell the communicator sometime if there is opportunity.'

Plainly he is desirous of letting his mediums know when they succeed and it is fair to suggest that the Hullulu medium found she had hit the mark, the interpretation of the gibberish being ' Honolulu ', though Hottentot failed to score. A medium will always follow up a lucky shot and it needs not even an appeal to chance to explain the repetition of the word at the next sitting, after the verification, which was on May 26th (the date of the simultaneous test), the following being the words used :—

(The medium says) : ' You could play.'
(N. M. L. asks) : ' Play what ? '
(The medium) : ' Not a game, a music.'
(N. M. L.) : ' I'm afraid I can't, Raymond.'
(Feda (*sotto voce*) : ' She can't do that ') : ' He wanted to know whether you could play Hulu-Honolulu.'

One of the strongest ' evidential ' stories in the book being thus explicable without calling upon the supernatural, any others lose their value even if no explanation can be based on the available facts ; but apart from this explanation the choice of the test word throws a light upon the little group tilting the table at Birmingham. With the whole dictionary and all geography from which to

choose, they selected a sound which had occurred in a former revelation and therefore had a chance of repetition. If in his laboratory days Sir Oliver examined a substance for the presence of arsenic, he would first test his reagents for the presence of that metal lest they might contain a trace of it and vitiate the experiment. In this test the experimenters did what was equivalent to selecting an arsenic-contaminated test-tube to use in an analysis for that substance.

How did the word come to be selected ? If the family of this distinguished man had used ordinary caution in formulating the test, they would certainly have chosen a word that had not occurred before, and I think that point must be clear to the reader. But, though they are probably sensible people in ordinary life, when they turn to the spirit world they fall a prey to their dissociated streams, in which was the knowledge that the word or something like it had been used before and was likely to be used again, especially if, as I suggest, the medium knew it had scored. Hence these believers were, as far as concerned their dissociated streams, deliberately introducing a source of error or, in laboratory language, cooking the experiment.

Among my card tricks is included the elementary one (technically known as 'forcing a card') described at the beginning of this chapter, but I may let some one choose a card from the pack on the table whilst my back is turned ; then, the card being placed in the pack which I have now taken in my hand, I do some other trick. It is common

for these tricks to be confounded, and for one of my audience to assure friends that I let him or her take a card from the pack on the table when my back was turned and then named it by 'thought-reading.' Such a performance is beyond me, but a like garbled account is characteristic of what we hear concerning séances: the story-tellers are in a state of mental confusion, they add or subtract in order to make the result emphatic, any power of criticism they possess is suspended, and we are asked to swallow the final product and confess ourselves believers.

After considering my own experiences and the evidence produced by Sir Oliver Lodge, I have reached the conclusion that no one desirous of believing only the truth can accept anything 'supernormal' without the strictest investigation on the spot, aided by a knowledge of trickery, verbal or material, as well as of the results produced by dissociation and logic-tight compartments in the minds of the would-be honest.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle shows how convincing a twice-told tale becomes. I borrow from *The New Revelation* (p. 64):—

> 'Or once again, if Raymond can tell us of a photograph no copy of which had reached England, and which proved to be exactly as he described it, and if he can give us, through the lips of strangers, all sorts of details of his home life, which his own relatives had to verify before they found them to be true, is it unreasonable to suppose that he is fairly accurate in his description of his own experiences and state of life at the moment at which he is communicating?'

The words ' can tell us of a photograph no copy of which had reached England ' would lead us to believe that information that the photograph existed came from Raymond: fortunately the original account is accessible.

Here is the photograph story, taken from *Raymond* (p. 195). The medium speaks, saying: ' You have several portraits of this boy. Before he went away you had got a good portrait of him—two—no three. Two where he is alone and one where he is in a group of other men. He is particular that I should tell you of this. In one you see his walking-stick '. (Moonstone here put an imaginary stick under his arm.)

This is ordinary guess-work, and it would be true of the families of most officers, even as to the stick ; but it was not true in this case, for we read that though they had ' single photographs of him of course, and in uniform ', they had *not* one of him in a group of other men ; yet this is the revelation referred to by Sir Arthur—the photograph incident that has impressed so many.

Let us put the two statements side by side :—

Before he went away you had . . . one where he is in a group of other men. He is particular that I should tell you of this.	. . . Raymond can tell us of a photograph no copy of which had reached England ?

Not being able to explain the extraordinary identity of these photographs, I must leave the problem to the creator of Sherlock Holmes ; we shall gain no help from Sir Oliver, for his ideas of

identity, as we shall see in the next paragraph, are equally curious.

Now for 'exactly as he described it': Sir Oliver Lodge, having been informed in an ordinary letter that a group photograph containing Raymond is being sent to him from France, went to another medium and told her, 'He said something about having a photograph taken with some other men' (this itself is a garbled statement); leading questions followed, and the medium fenced with them. Here are the important ones :—

O. J. L. : 'Do you recollect the photograph at all?'
'He thinks there were several others taken with him, not one or two, but several.' (This is not even a guess.)

O. J. L. : 'Does he remember how he looked in the photograph?'
'No, he doesn't remember how he looked.'

O. J. L. : 'No, no. I mean was he standing up?'
'No, he doesn't seem to think so. Some were raised up round; he was sitting down, and some were raised up at the back of him. Some were standing, and some were sitting, he thinks.'

(Here is a correct description, anyhow; it is an even chance whether he is sitting or standing, and, the sitting chance being taken, the rest is padding. We are told on page 279 that another photograph showed him standing, so that a hit could have been scored if the other chance had been taken.)

O. J. L. : 'Did he have a stick?'
'He doesn't remember that.'

(Yet the presence of a stick in the picture is hailed on page 110 as one of the strikingly correct peculiarities mentioned by Raymond. Be it noted that the stick was spoken of in connection with one of the three photographs that the family was said to have *before he went away*, and is used as 'evidence' concerning *the one sent home from France*.)

O. J. L. : 'Was it out of doors?'

'Yes, practically.'

Feda (*sotto voce*): 'What you mean, "yes practically,"' must have been out of doors or not out of doors. You mean yes, don't you?'

Feda thinks he means 'yes,' because he says 'practically'.

O. J. L. : 'It may have been a shelter.'

'It might have been. Try to show Feda. At the back he shows me lines going down. It looks like a black background, with lines at the back of them. (Feda here kept drawing vertical lines in the air.)'

(The shelter is suggested by O. J. L. ; Feda takes the hint and visualises the shelter. Most shelters have vertical lines in their structure. Such lines occur in the photograph and are strong 'evidence.' The background is not black except for two open windows.)

The only revelation worthy of attention is this : 'He remembers that some one wanted to lean on him ; but he is not sure if he was taken with some one leaning on him. . . . The last what he gave you, what were a B, will be rather prominent in that photograph. It wasn't taken in a photographer's place.' (Few out-door groups are.)

In the photograph he has some one's hand

resting on his shoulder, and an ambiguous guess scores a hit. As for B, Sir Oliver writes: 'I have asked several people which member of the group seemed most prominent; and except as regards central position a well-lighted standing figure on the right has usually been pointed to as the most prominent. This one is "B", as stated, namely, Captain S. T. Boast.'

Some initials are guessed—C, B, R, and K. As there are twenty-one people in the group, and the alphabet contains only twenty-four letters (excluding X and Z), it is hardly a mathematical surprise that seventy-five per cent. are correct.

So much for the photograph that proved to be 'exactly as he described it' (Sir Arthur) and 'one of the best pieces of evidence that has been given' (Sir Oliver).

'All sorts of details of his home life' we must suppose refers to the scenery of Woolacombe, the tent, the boat that went (or didn't) on land, the song about Hululu and the Hottentot, the fishing rods that are not understood at present, and so on.

As a test of unintentional garbling I asked a professional man, who had read *Raymond* sympathetically, to give me a short account of what the medium said about the photograph. Here is his version, and it must be understood that he knew I should criticise it :—

'Sir Oliver Lodge was told by a medium that Raymond wished to tell him about a photograph taken in France. The medium said the photograph was of a group of officers including Raymond—a photo Sir Oliver had not seen.

There were lines running vertically in the background. Raymond is seated. Some one's knee was preventing him from sitting comfortably and annoyed him. He was holding a stick. *The photo was out of doors,* but in a sheltered position.'

The only points in which this tallies with the book description of what the medium (not Sir Oliver) said are those shown by the words in italic. The rest is garbled, and for the garbling my friend and Sir Oliver are about equally responsible.

I have since asked other intelligent people to read the chapter and then write out the story; the result is generally similar to that just given. The affair is such a to-do about nothing that the sympathetic and uncritical reader, deceived by the fuss, thinks there must be something in it and makes additions of his own to account for his belief. Had he read it critically he would have recognised the emptiness of the story, but once he is impressed by it he must improve it or become aware of its flimsiness.

Once again I must emphasise the way in which a guess, wide of the truth, is wrenched into an application to something entirely irrelevant. The first medium says that before Raymond went away his family had a photograph which showed him in a group of other men; *because this is not true,* it is twisted into a reference to a photograph taken in France and not yet received. The revelations of this medium must be cut out of the story, and the whole incident is reduced to Sir Oliver Lodge being

told in an ordinary letter that a group photograph is on its way to him ; then he tells another medium about a group photograph, and in answer to leading questions she makes the halting guesses reproduced above.

This is the famous photograph story, stripped of exaggeration and garbling. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle would lead us to believe that the medium told Sir Oliver about the existence of the photograph, but the true account shows that, so far from this being the case, *Sir Oliver told the medium.*

It is a commonplace of spiritualism that a medium may be guilty of trickery at one time and genuinely gifted at another. We may freely admit that mediums are peculiar people, but when Sir Arthur Conan Doyle writes on a subject that needs careful observation and description and gives this distorted account of the photograph story, he can expect little credence when he writes in the same book equally convincing stories of the supernatural and puts them before the public as a contribution to religious thought. He gives a list of eminent men who vouch for the genuineness of supernatural phenomena, and says that the days are past when their opinions can be dismissed with the empty ' All rot ' or ' Nauseating drivel ' formula. I agree, and regard their opinions as interesting objects of psychological study. A little research could produce a longer list of men, equally eminent in their day, who believed in witchcraft and were willing to execute people in accordance with that belief. The belief may

yet return with all its horrors if *The New Revelation* is taken seriously. On page 168 we read concerning the Cheriton poltergeist [1] :—

'It is very probable that Mr. Rolfe is, unknown to himself, a physical medium, and that when he was in the confined space of the cellar he turned it into a cabinet in which his magnetic powers could accumulate and be available for use.' (It is hard to believe that he who speaks like this about 'magnetic powers' once had at least an elementary knowledge of physics.) On page 170 we read, concerning another poltergeist, that '. . . a clergyman, with some knowledge of occult matters, has succeeded by sympathetic reasoning and prayer in obtaining a promise from the entity that it will plague the household no more.'

Poor Mr. Rolfe has had a narrow escape of being mixed up with an 'entity' who, or which, might have led him to the stake in a thorough-going spiritualist age.

This relation between spiritualism and witchcraft is not a fantasy of my unconscious ; listen to this from another believer :—

'The dangers of the spiritual world are greater because, bad as a man living on our plane may be, he cannot compare in that respect with a thoroughly wicked denizen

[1] A poltergeist is a spirit that throws things about ; its appearance is generally associated with the presence of some young person, whose tricks may be detected to the discredit of the ghostly cause. If trickery is not detected the poltergeist is the manifestation of an evil spirit.

of the fourth-dimensional space, whose power is all the greater because his very existence is almost universally denied. What little good was ever in him has been blotted out in the course, perhaps, of centuries; his cunning passes earthly comprehension; his experience of the ways and foibles of humanity is profound; his malignity is dreadful. To be fully under the influence of such an entity as this is to be at his mercy, and, as no such word exists in his vocabulary, the end is a foregone conclusion, unless another force of a contrary character and at least as powerful is directed against him.' [1]

It is indeed fortunate that the existence of these entities is almost universally denied. Hangings and burnings would be soon in fashion again if any large proportion of us were influenced by such a horrible complex.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has given an account to the papers (see *Daily Telegraph*, February 18th, 1919) of a séance in Wales. Hymns were sung to produce a suitable emotional state, and 'the lights were turned down in order to obtain the proper conditions, because ether transmits light, and is also the source of all psychic phenomena.' Then, the medium being tied down, a tambourine rattled, and a coat and furniture flew about. The bearing of this upon life in the hereafter, which Sir Arthur discusses in connection with the performance, is not clear, but the effects are identical with those produced by the Davenport Brothers, who were exposed in 1868.[2]

[1] *Problems of the Borderland*, p. 49, by J. Herbert Slater. Wm. Rider & Sons, 1915.

[2] See *The Question*, p. 103.

The list of witnesses, who numbered about twenty, leads me to remark that though in a multitude of counsellors there may be wisdom yet in a crowd of witnesses there is Herd Instinct. With a conspicuous member of the Herd like Sir Arthur in the lead, the sway of emotion will dull any criticism, and if a few are unconvinced they will remain silent.[1]

The statement that ether is the source of all psychic phenomena is startling, but unsupported. Another believer, Sir William Crookes, says, concerning exhibitions of what he calls 'Psychic Force', that '. . . everything recorded has taken place *in the light*'.[2] So the reseems to be some fundamental error about the observations of one of them. But Sir William's results were obtained from the famous Daniel Home, whose years of experience in credulity allowed him to take risks which the humble beginners in Wales hardly dared.

To examine all the stories of the supernatural is impossible; many are, I frankly admit, inexplicable *on the evidence*; but it is fair to assert that when an observer, on a subject which requires the most careful watching and closest reasoning, shows by his own account that he is ready to be deceived, then we cannot be convinced by his

[1] In *Spiritualism—the inside Truth* (chap. vi) Stuart Cumberland tells how this medium refused to admit him to a séance. Stringent precautions, however, were followed by a failure to produce spirit manifestations.

[2] *Phenomena of Modern Spiritualism*, p. 25. 'Two Worlds' Publishing Co., 1903.

statements when they are unverifiable. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is thus ruled out of court, for his account of the photograph story shows, to put it gently, a lack of clear writing, and his readiness to thrust upon the public a repetition of the Davenport tricks, without a warning as to their history, is not what we should expect from a man who has studied the subject for thirty years.

Sir William Crookes gives detailed accounts of marvellous happenings, but two mediums in whom he had implicit trust were detected in deliberate fraud by other people,[1] so that his critical powers failed him.

Some of his accounts show curious lapses. In one experiment an accordion is placed in a cage under the table and Mr. Home puts his hand into the top of the cage to do psychic things with the instrument. The temperature of the room is carefully recorded (that doesn't matter, but imparts a scientific flavour to the observations) although we are not told why the experiment was done under the table instead of in a more convenient position on top of it, though ' my assistant went under the table, and reported that the accordion was expanding and contracting,' and ' Dr. A. B. now looked under the table and said that Mr. Home's hand appeared quite still.' Sir William would never have made such an omission if he had been using the same reasoning powers that he used in his scientific descriptions.

[1] Miss Fox and Mrs. Cook ; see *The Question*, pp. 84 and 127.

It is noticeable that the chief 'scientific' supporters of spiritualism are eminent in physical science; they have been trained in a world where honesty is assumed to be a quality of all workers. A laboratory assistant who played a trick upon one of them would find his career at an end, and ordinary cunning is foreign to them. When they enter upon the world of Dissociates, where deceit masquerades under the disguise of transparent honesty, these eminent men are but as babes—country cousins in the hands of confidence-trick men—and their opinions are of less value than those of a smart schoolboy.

Spirit photographs are useful to people who desire to show material evidence for their beliefs, and for more than fifty years the desire has been met by periodical outbreaks of this particular manifestation, with occasional exposures of fraud. The spirit effects can be produced by double exposure of one plate or by printing on one paper from two negatives, so that the declaration that a photograph is that of a spirit carries no proof with it and one must examine the circumstances under which the photograph is obtained.

A friend of mine, with a decided tendency to belief in the reality of spirit photography, was good enough to show me photographs of himself with spirit forms beside him, and undertook to repeat his visit to the photographer—who is accepted as genuine by leading spiritualists and appears to be the chief exponent in the art of spirit photography in this country—and take with him plates supplied by myself.

The photographer allows you to bring your own plates, goes with you into the dark-room, and allows you to initial the plate before it is put in the frame (whether it is your plate which you mark depends upon the will and dexterity of the artist, aided by the darkness and a preliminary hymn and prayer which should remove all doubts from your mind). Then the plate is put in the camera and, whilst attendant ladies pass into a trance, an exposure is made with yourself as the sitter. Next the plate is developed under your eyes and perhaps a spirit form is revealed.

I provided my friend with a packet of four plates, three of which had been exposed so that on being developed they would show a very conspicuous cross. At the séance two plates were first exposed and developed; on one appeared a cross with the portrait of the sitter, on the other appeared only the portrait.

The photographer now knew that one plate at least was marked, and when the remaining two plates were exposed and developed the cross appeared on both of them.[1] There had been no substitution, but no spirit photographs either. Then the old excuse appeared—'one negative thought will spoil a whole circle', or, in other

[1] This is doubtful. My informant reported that he saw no cross on the last two plates, but when the four prints came to hand the cross appeared on three of them. Two prints were identical—though each was supposed to be from its own negative. If the photographer aimed at puzzling me he has succeeded

words, ' if you are on the watch for trickery we won't perform '.

It must be remembered that even in a ' good ' séance only one or two spirit results may appear in several exposures, so the photographer can always expose, develop, and examine any or all of your plates, and at the least suspicion that yours are marked he may refrain from substituting his own prepared plates and blame the spirits for the lack of manifestations.

One may ask why a private mark (say a faint file scratch on the edge) was not put on the plates so that the photographer himself could not detect, even after development, that they were marked in any way ? Such a course would at once reveal whether substitution had taken place—though even then the real believer could declare that the spirits had removed the scratches.

But this test is frustrated by the photographer—simple honest man—who refuses to part with the plates ; he says they are now his property, but he will let you have some prints !

In this example we find, as in so much ' evidential material ', a point where investigation is blocked and credulity is demanded. Another piece of evidence is produced in this case, and I am shown a spirit photograph beside a lady's. The lady claims that the spirit is that of a young man, now deceased, to whom she was engaged. She was a stranger to the photographer, so how could he produce the likeness even if he substituted his own plates ? But when I showed this spirit

photograph to a friend, with a query as to sex, she answered, 'But it *is* a woman, isn't it? It looks rather like N——.'

Now N—— is a mature maiden lady, so that the sexless features of the spirit leave plenty of room for the play of fancy.

We are invited to accept or disprove stories of spirit photography reported from the Continent, but whilst leading spiritualists in this country accept the productions of the man whose methods I have described I must refuse attention to anything they vouch for farther afield.

Mr. Crawford, a mathematician and engineer of Belfast, has published reports of investigations of table-lifting séances, and builds up a theory of spiritual cantilevers which he believes to explain his results. The theory is pretty and the diagrams are impressive, but the facts first call for examination.

Reading his accounts, I find that the experiments are carried out in a dim red light, for a sudden white light causes the immediate cessation of the phenomena. In addition there is a sacred line between the medium and the levitated table which must not be investigated on pain of dreadful results to the medium. This threat of physical evil to the medium if the sceptic should investigate at a crucial point is a common pretext, but though sceptics have often taken the risk, and seized a spirit to discover a disguised medium, there is no record of such disastrous results as Mr. Crawford would have us fear.

I suggest that this investigator should use his technical knowledge to show how a simple but material cantilever, operated by the medium along the sacred line, can produce levitation of the table.

The complaint is made that scientific men scoff at spiritualism and yet refuse to investigate it ; in the last two examples we see why this is inevitable. Investigation is prevented in each at the very point where fraud might be detected ; so long as such obstruction is maintained the spiritualists are likely to continue their complaints, and one must be content to speculate on the mental state which allows a few men of scientific training to support their claims.

The reader must not think that my aim is to convert spiritualists from their belief. It is, as I have tried to show in earlier chapters, useless to attack rationalisations in an effort to penetrate a logic-tight compartment ; as soon as one defence is broken down another is built up, and one can only take comfort from the history of other examples of *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, as Sir Thomas Browne (he himself being, strangely enough, an active believer in witchcraft) called them, and look forward to the fading away of this delusion. Just as the belief in witchcraft passed away from the educated and intelligent, lingering only amongst the ignorant, so this delusion will pass and leave our descendants to wonder how some of us came to be its victims.

CHAPTER XIII

THE EVOLUTION OF THE MEDIUM

AFTER meeting my first medium I came away with the feeling that he was a rather artful liar; but now, whilst retaining that opinion, I am ready to admit that perhaps his lying was not a product of his consciousness. I know nothing of his history, but he was accepted by intelligent people as honest and respectable; moreover, records of spiritualism contain so many examples of people whose belief in their own supernatural powers must be accepted as real in spite of manifest deceit, that we must again fall back upon dissociation to explain their state of mind.

I shall assume the existence of three groups just as in connection with hysteria, and classify mediums, clairvoyants, water-diviners and other producers of the supernatural into—

1. The deceiver pure and simple.
2. The deceiver who has repressed the consciousness of deceit and become a Dissociate.
3. The subject who has never been conscious of deceit, but, led astray by his unconscious, has deceived himself from the beginning and finished as a Dissociate.

To place any performer in the proper group is again a matter of judgement. Having a small repertory of tricks, including water-divining and a few manifestations with a pack of cards, I have sometimes put myself in the first group with temporary success.

The development of a case of the second group is probably not a phenomenon that has ever been continuously observed, but Robert Browning has formed such an excellent conception of it in *Mr. Sludge, the Medium*, that his description bears comparison with my theory of the development of some hysterics. David Sludge is a house-servant and his master is pictured discussing high finance with his guests when the boy breaks in, saying, 'Sir, I've a five-dollar note.' The scorn of the guests is immediate :—'He stole it, then ; shove him out'. And David is given the swift kick of ignominy.

'But,' says the poet,

> 'Let the same lad hear you talk as grand
> Of signs and wonders, the invisible world.
> If he break in with "Sir, I saw a ghost!"[2]
> Ah, the ways change![3]

Browning leaves us to imagine the boy's motive ; perhaps his was just a boyish trick inspired by a desire for notoriety of which he himself was scarcely conscious, but, like the unfortunate hysteric who meets credulity, David is led on to produce more manifestations.

'And, David, (is not that your Christian name ?)
Of all things, should this happen twice—it may—
Be sure while fresh in mind, you let us know ! '

Then later :—

'"... came raps !
While a light whisked" ... "Shaped somewhat like a star ?
Well, like some sort of stars, ma'am." "So we thought !
And any voice ? Not yet ? Try hard, next time,
If you can't hear a voice ; we think you may."
. . . .
'So David holds the circle, rules the roast,
Narrates the vision, peeps in the glass ball,
Sets-to the spirit-writing, hears the raps,
As the case may be.'

Then begins his conflict ; like the patient who successfully feigns symptoms, he finds withdrawal difficult :—

'You'd prove firmer in his place ?
You'd find the courage—that first flurry over,
That mild bit of romancing-work at end, ...
To interpose with "It gets serious, this ;
Must stop here. Sir, I saw no ghost at all.
Inform your friends I made—well, fools of them,
And found you ready-made. I've lived in clover
These three weeks : take it out in kicks of me ! "
I doubt it. Ask your conscience ! '

Says poor David :—

'There's something in real truth (explain who can)
One casts a wistful eye at.'

Now he faces the same dilemma that the developing hysteric has to meet, and as the hysteric

reaches a false salvation by the repression of the knowledge of deceit so does David :—

'Why, when I cheat,
Mean to cheat, do cheat, and am caught in the act,
Are you, or, rather, am I sure o' the fact ?
Well then I'm not sure ! I may be, perhaps,
Free as a babe from cheating : how it began,
My gift . . . no matter ; what 'tis got to be
In the end now, that's the question ; answer that !
Had I seen, perhaps, what hand was holding mine,
Leading me whither, I had died of fright.'

Nor does the poet omit the development of Receptivity :—

'I'm eyes, ears, mouth of me, one gaze and gape,
Nothing eludes me, everything's a hint,
Handle and help.'

At the last the youth, once an innocent jester, pours a stream of half-believed lies upon the man who, having caught him in his fraud, lets him go with a chance to start life afresh.

Browning does not carry the idea of repression as far as I do, Sludge producing clouds of rationalisations to cover his inconsistencies. The idea of dissociation does not present itself, but the whole picture can be taken to represent the evolution of many mediums with their mixture of belief and deception.

Just as in the hysteric we meet with mechanical ways of deceit, shown by self-inflicted injuries, so in the medium we meet with mechanical tricks for the production of spurious phenomena. In

both cases fully-conscious deceit, reconciled to the moral complexes by rationalisations, is the easiest explanation, but sometimes fully-conscious deceit is unlikely.

There is a disappointing lack of originality in spiritualist literature, for the same stories of the marvellous are repeated in one book and another. The Fox Sisters, Slade, Eglington, Eusapia Palladino and others appear according to the fancy of the writer, and their fraudulent tricks may or may not be acknowledged. It is a peculiarity of spiritualist reasoning that if a medium is caught cheating it only proves that he was cheating when he was caught; if he is not caught next time, we must accept as genuine the phenomena then produced.

But no spiritualist writer can avoid the names of Home, Stainton Moses and Mrs. Piper, for *they were never caught cheating*; nevertheless, we apparently need testimonials at great length to their honesty. Mr. J. Arthur Hill gives two pages of testimonials to Stainton Moses, and repeats a story telling how the Reverend medium made an automatic drawing of a horse and truck and gave a spirit message concerning a man who had been killed that day under a steamroller in Baker Street. Mr. Hill says: 'Mr. Moses had passed through Baker Street in the afternoon, but had heard nothing of any such incident.'[1]

If Mr. Hill knew anything about dissociation he would not give us this oft-quoted but flimsy

[1] *Spiritualism*, p. 64. Cassell & Co., 1918.

story. Whence does he obtain his evidence that the medium had heard nothing of the incident? Of course, from the honest personality of Mr. Stainton Moses himself.

But a story of some terrifying episode is often, by psychological technique, extracted from a war-strained soldier only to be repressed and honestly denied by the man a little while later. If the dissociated sufferer can deny the truth of an incident which, when recalled again, fills him with horror, then the denial by another Dissociate that he has heard of a street accident does not carry weight, even if we read a bookful of testimony to his honesty.

The accounts of this famous medium, who is still held in awe by believers, are full of such happenings. On another occasion the spirit in possession of him gave the names of members of a family who had died in India and were unknown to him or any one present. The names were verified by reference to the obituary column of *The Times* of a few days before. We can assume that the honest Stainton Moses did not read *The Times*, but that the dissociated Stainton Moses read and remembered.

With this dissociation well established and having for its object the production of occult phenomena, we can understand the rest of the manifestations that he produced for his circle of friends. He received numerous communications from the dead, produced spirit lights, transferred objects from one room to another through closed doors, floated

about, and, in short, went through all the spiritualist repertory.

The ball is kept rolling by all sorts of people. The late Archdeacon Wilberforce, who believed in ' objective entities that seem able to manipulate or influence nerve currents, or magnetic ether, or whatever it is, of persons in the flesh ',[1] wrote approvingly of him : ' The most remarkable medium I ever knew was the Reverend Stainton Moses, a clergyman in my father's diocese of Oxford '.[2]

Of the same medium Mr. Podmore says : ' Apart from the moral difficulties involved, there is little or nothing to forbid the supposition that the whole of these messages were deliberately concocted by Mr. Moses himself and palmed off upon his unsuspecting friends.' [3]

The moral difficulties disappear when we consider the case as one of dissociation. His spirit communications were psychologically identical with the automatic writings of the Glastonbury archæologists (see Chapter IX) ; he read obituary notices, studied out-of-the-way stories of men and women, and from the stores of his unconscious he produced this information as news from the spirit world. But, knowing nothing of the ways of the unconscious and becoming a prey to his own dissociated stream, he fed this stream and drifted with it into something a little removed from sanity.

I know not how the manifestations began, and

[1] *There is no Death*, p. 14. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 62.
[3] *Studies in Psychical Research*, p. 133.

whether he belonged to my second or third group I do not attempt to discuss ; I am satisfied if I have made it clear that the work of this wonderful medium can be explained otherwise than by one of the two alternatives of spiritualism or conscious deceit.

We meet with the same rush to testify to the honesty of Mrs. Piper. Sir Oliver Lodge of course guarantees her, and the late Professor William James, the Harvard psychologist, wrote of her : ' Practically I should be willing now to stake as much money on Mrs. Piper's honesty as on that of any one I know, and am quite satisfied to leave my reputation for wisdom or folly so far as human nature is concerned to stand or fall by this declaration.' [1]

This honesty of the main personality of the Dissociate leads astray professors of physics or of the old psychology.[2] It is the honest but mistaken man who misleads his fellows. We are on our guard against the rogue, and the conscious deceiver must needs be a good actor if he would succeed. The best actor knows he is acting, but the Reverend Moses needed no effort to preserve for years the appearance of straightforwardness and honesty. As far as he knew, he *was* straightforward and honest, though beneath his consciousness lay fathomless possibilities of deceit,

[1] Re-quoted from *Spiritualism*, p. 75.

[2] I may owe an apology here to the memory of Professor James, for the original quotation is given without its context.

ever ready to take advantage of the externals of an honest man.

As I said in Chapter VI, an authoritative and confident manner makes easy the acceptance of suggestion. What can be more authoritative and confident than the manner of a man who believes what he says and knows that his hearers are willing to believe? If what he says are lies and delusions, that makes no difference in his manner, and his unsuspicious hearers are still ready to stake their reputations upon his honesty. That readiness only makes them the more suggestible and renders valueless their opinion as to the truth of what he says.

Spiritualist writers are glib concerning 'subliminal consciousness', and, knowing not what they mean, attribute to it powers of communication with the spirit world. The only one worthy of study is the late F. H. Myers, and though his stories of the marvellous are largely repetitions of old material yet his treatment of the psychology of double personality is illuminating. His work on *Human Personality*, if free from the spiritualist complex, would probably rank well in advance of its period. He has a good grasp of the subject of hysterical double personality, giving some excellent examples, but postulates a transition from the imaginings of the hysteric to the revelations of the spirit world. That the mind should pass through disease on its way to divine revelation, the boundary between the two being only a matter of judgement, is a necessary part of his explanation of

mediumism. Just as spiritualists will maintain their belief in a medium after fraud has been detected, placing upon unbelievers the onus of proving fraud in every case, so Myers, knowing the workings of hysterical double personality, claims the right to exclude hysteria whenever he pleases and to attribute a divine origin to the material then produced. This demand appeals neither to the religious man nor to the sceptic.

I take the liberty of borrowing a story from Mr. Hereward Carrington, a spiritualist of some critical power.[1]

'One of the most interesting cases that I have ever encountered is the following, which I consider of remarkable psychological interest from various points of view.

During the early summer of 1911, a gentleman called upon me, stating that he knew a wonderful physical medium, of the same type as Palladino. He himself was a lawyer; his friend, the medium, was also a lawyer, and had "a scientific interest in these things," and in "having the remarkable manifestations which occurred in his presence solved," etc. For three years and a half, I was told, this case had been under private observation, and the manifestations had grown more and more numerous and bewildering as time went on. This, and much more of like nature, I heard by way of preliminary to the investigation of what appeared to be a very promising case.

An evening having been arranged, the two gentlemen called at my house, and, after a chat, the demonstrations were undertaken.

A broom was placed on the floor, and then, the medium kneeling over the object (or, rather, squatting on the ground), he placed his fingers on either side of the broom-

[1] *Personal Experiences in Spiritualism*, pp. 59–61. T. Werner Laurie, Ltd.

handle, and then gradually took them away. As he did so the broom was seen to rise into the air. It remained suspended in space for a few seconds, then fell to the floor. The effect was most striking, while the phenomenon was of that simple order which one would naturally expect to discover in a simple undeveloped medium.

The first two or three experiments interested me immensely, I must confess. But I noted one particular thing about the movements of the medium, which was that every time he placed an object on the floor, he placed it very close to his knees ; this caused me to look between his knees intently instead of at the object during the next few trials. The result was that I distinctly saw *a fine black thread* stretched from leg to leg, forming a loop, into which the various objects were slipped in the act of placing them on the floor. The rest was only a matter of balance.

In spite of the fact that I had discovered the *modus operandi*, I did not wish to act hastily, having been accused so often in the past of condemning too hastily upon discovering the fraud. Accordingly I asked the medium to meet me a few evenings later at the office of my friend, Dr. Gustave Sayer, and here we witnessed a second demonstration. It would be useless to repeat the details of this performance, which was simply a repetition of the first. Suffice it to say that not only was the medium seen using the loop of thread throughout, but this loop broke twice during the evening—once in the middle of the experiment—the thread being heard to break, and the object at once falling to the ground.

On the first occasion the medium made an excuse, retired upstairs, and evidently arranged the thread, for he came down again in a few minutes and proceeded to give us a further test. Upon the thread (audibly) breaking a second time, however, he said that he "did not think he could do any more for us that evening," and sat down, apparently exhausted.

It was the most flagrant and barefaced swindle I ever came across, and in this Dr. Sayer agrees with me.

And yet here was a young lawyer practising these

tricks, apparently for no motive, and constantly lying about them in a most astonishing manner; and this was a case from which much was to be hoped, apparently.[1]

This story hardly needs comment; but the writer's attitude towards another and more famous medium, Eusapia Palladino, is very different.

Until I read the book from which these passages are quoted I thought no one regarded this lady as anything but an exposed fraud; even Sir Oliver Lodge has written concerning her, 'my only regret is that I allowed myself to make a report, although only a private report, to the Society for Psychical Research, on the strength of a few exceptionally good sittings, instead of waiting until I had likewise experienced some of the bad or tricky sittings to which all the Continental observers had borne frequent witness.'[1]

Mr. Carrington says of this lady[2]:—

'In any event, it appears to me obvious that, even assuming that fraud was intended on this occasion, it proves nothing more than the fact that Eusapia will resort to clever trickery whenever the occasion is given her to do so—a fact which all students of her phenomena know full well already; and it does not in the least prove that the whole séance was fraudulent—which is what is implied in Professor Munsterberg's article. Every one knows well enough that scores of phenomena have been observed in the past which could not possibly have been accounted for, even assuming that the medium had both her feet free—a fact I have previously pointed out. The difference between Eusapia and the other mediums spoken of

[1] Quoted from *The Question*, p. 118.
[2] *Personal Experiences*, p. 174.

in this volume is this, that in their case they invariably fail whenever "test conditions" are imposed, whereas Eusapia generally succeeds; further, the whole tenor and setting of the séance, so to speak, is entirely different. Lastly, we have the unanimity of opinion amongst scientific men as to Eusapia's powers, whereas we have nothing of the sort in the case of any other medium. On the contrary, whenever they are investigated along these lines, they either fail altogether or are detected in fraud.'

This gentleman has reason for pride in his powers of observation, but his spiritualist complexes are so firmly enclosed in their logic-tight compartment that his own critical powers beat in vain against the door. It was unfortunate for the young lawyer, but at the same time inexplicable, that Mr. Carrington pitted his observations, made at two sittings only, against those of the people who had had the case under private observation for three and a half years. Surely this respectable young man deserved the laurels of mediumism as much as did Eusapia. What are two failures against three and a half years' manifestations that 'had grown more and more numerous and bewildering as time went on'? I am sure that, if Mr. Hereward Carrington had given his blessing, this young man might have become a famous medium instead of being blighted after his years of successful effort.

But Mr. Carrington cannot conceive an alternative between a bare-faced swindle and a spirit manifestation, and in this he is harsher than I. It is plain that this young lawyer had the respect of his friends and was believed to be honest, just

like Mrs. Piper and Stainton Moses, and Mr. Carrington missed a chance of useful psychological investigation when he dismissed the case so curtly. The chance cannot be recalled, but a talk with this medium might have helped in the understanding of his distinctly disordered mind. I once had the chance of a frank talk with the accomplice of a professional medium, but, though he had some belief in the occult, he was so fully conscious of his roguery that I learned no more psychology than I have picked up from a three-card trickster. Anyhow, Mr. Carrington gives us an example of a medium in the making who we can only guess was a man whose disappointed ambitions and neurotic 'Will to Power' had led him astray.

I wonder how Mr. Carrington explains the failure of previous observers to detect the trickery? The man's apparent honesty of course helped, but the Herd Instinct was also at work and converts would be unlikely to criticise when a few reputable people had expressed their belief. Certain card-tricks are safer from detection by a large audience than by a small one. If three people are present and one thinks he detects the trick he may speak, for he is only in a minority of one to two; but if five out of fifteen detect it, each one, feeling he is in a minority of one to fourteen, is over-ruled by his sense of insignificance and remains silent accordingly. It is easier to sway a crowd than to persuade an individual.

Let me make it clear that I do not merely compare the medium with the hysteric, I regard

them as identical except in those cases where the medium is a conscious deceiver. The attitude of the believers in the honesty of the medium is the same as that of the sympathising friends of the hysteric patient, and it is often as difficult and thankless a task to explain the patient's condition to his or her friends as it is to save the credulous from falling a prey to the fortune-teller. But such difference as there may be is in favour of the unfortunate hysteric, who is the victim of forces that are too powerful to be resisted without help and who often anxiously desires recovery.

I have seen in a man suffering from war-strain the spontaneous development of what would be accepted as clairvoyance; the identity of his performance with that of the medium is of great importance. The patient was in that condition of dissociation or partial hypnosis into which these men easily pass, and was apparently 'seeing' some of the horrors he had experienced. As a rule such revivals of war episodes can be relied upon as a true reproduction of actual events, but in this case there were inconsistencies in the story. For example, describing how Uhlans drove their lances into Belgian babies, he said: 'If I had my revolver I'd let them have it,' but gave no indication of what he, a British soldier, was doing unarmed and under such circumstances. Moreover, though the account was given with due emphasis, there was a lack of the emotion characteristic of the revival of actual horrors.

Then a break came in the story, and he went on

to describe a tragedy which had recently roused public interest. He saw the murderer walking with his victim, described how she handed over certain articles to him, and then how the man shot her and hurried off.

All this was graphically related as if he were actually witnessing the tragedy, and as I listened I realised how any one ignorant of the workings of a disordered mind would feel compelled to believe in the reality of clairvoyance and might be impelled to act upon the belief, for the description of the murder, if true, could only have been derived from something like second-sight.

The cause at work in producing these fantasies was fairly clear. The man had seen three years of fighting, and had resolutely tried to forget all that he had passed through ; he had the usual symptoms of ' shell-shock ', and in addition complained bitterly of being haunted by dreams of murder. I know not what particular happening had so impressed him, but in his unconscious were the memories of many horrors which, refused admission to his consciousness, insisted on manifesting themselves by dreams and waking fears.

Every horrible thing he read or heard was joined on to his dissociated stream of memories and emotions, to be reproduced in dreams and fantasies.

In his imaginings there was a mixture of truth and fancy ; the figure of the murderer, for example, proved to be associated in his mind with the figure of an officer who was present at a time of great emotional strain, and the articles handed

over by the victim were identical with articles familiar to the patient and of emotional importance to him. The other reproductions proved to be of incidents which had been related to him and to which he had given an intimate personal interest whilst elaborating them ; his own experiences were more deeply repressed.

His condition was identical with that of the honest medium—whether Stainton Moses or more recently advertised seers—but fortunately his friends recognised the true nature of his disorder and, instead of cultivating it as a 'gift', took steps to have it treated as a disease.

In the description of mediums we often find hints of hysterical symptoms. Sir Oliver Lodge tells of the sighings and writhings of one of his performers, but it is not often that a definite diagnosis is made as in the following extract [1] :—

'I do not think that any one who has seen the effects of a *good* séance upon Eusapia could doubt its reality. She has been known to suffer from partial paralysis, from hysteria, nausea, amnesia, loss of vision, as well as great weakness, prostration, etc., after the séance. I have seen her actively nauseated—excessively ill—after a good séance of this character, a symptom which is unlikely to be simulated, even if it could be. It is only after a *good* séance that such things occur, however. After a poor séance at which, perhaps, much fraud has occurred . . . I think that Eusapia often simulates exhaustion when, as a matter of fact, there is little or none, but this would not deceive one who has carefully watched her for weeks and months together, and has observed the effects of a genuine séance upon her.'

[1] *Personal Experiences*, p. 242.

The behaviour described by Mr. Carrington is precisely that of the hysteric, but it is not clear what he means when he says that her being actively nauseated is a symptom unlikely to be simulated, even if it could be. Hysterical vomiting—resulting from mental processes, and not from any physical cause—is very common, and is a simulation of bodily disease, though I do not imply that the patient is aware of the simulation. Perhaps being nauseated was, in this case, a symbol of the disgust which one personality felt towards the frauds and lies of the other. Eusapia, having reached a condition of hysterical dissociation, presents the material symptoms of such a condition, for the nausea, paralysis, amnesia, loss of vision, prostration, etc., are classical symptoms of hysteria. The spiritualist actually holds them forth as proofs of the reality of spirit communication! Let the reader bear in mind that they show Eusapia to have been not merely a cheat, but mentally diseased.

There is a sad list of books purporting to instruct beginners how to communicate with the dead, and the instructions are such as to induce dissociation—a mental condition with possibilities of self-deception and hysterical manifestations like those shown by Eusapia Palladino.

Bad enough it is to believe the fantasies of a diseased mind to be revelations from beyond the grave, but how can one sufficiently condemn men of learning and position who would lead along the pathway of disease those who mourn their lost ones?

A few extracts from *How to Speak with the Dead* [1] will illustrate these pernicious attempts.

(Page 88) 'By sitting in some place quite alone and free from interruption, and by adopting a mental attitude of passive receptivity and expectancy, the soul becomes ready to perceive and be affected by any spirits that may be in its vicinity and that may attempt to open up communications. . . . The manifestations . . . may vary from thought-suggestion to positive physical phenomena . . . such as the hearing of a voice or even the visual appearance of some supernormal object. All depends upon whether the sitter is or is not susceptible to psychical influence, and also upon whether the locality or the sitter personally is or is not haunted.'

Then (page 91) when the Dissociation has developed :—

'In cases where the sitter is markedly "psychic" it frequently happens that normal control over the body is lost. A condition of trance supervenes, and while this continues the spirit—which may be either a "second personality" or a soul from the outside—that has gained the upper hand makes use to a greater or less extent of the brain and other organs subject to its mastery. The hand may write: the mouth may speak: the whole body may be engaged in some impersonation; and all this may take place beyond the scope of the sitter's normal consciousness.'

Lest the hysterical dissociation is not yet enough developed, the victim receives, on page 98, another thrust along the road to disease :—

'If it be found on trial that psychic powers exist to an appreciable extent it may be taken for granted that they are capable of very great increase by persevering effort and systematic employment.'

[1] By Sciens: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co.

A warning is both given and stultified on page 107 :—

'Self-deception and the imaginations bred of wishes and emotions are to be guarded against;' . . . 'in solitary Expectancy fraud and trickery are completely absent, and all manifestations are matters of the most simple personal observation, the accuracy of which can be confirmed—as in an ordinary scientific laboratory—by the test of repetition.'

These directions are sufficient to start victims along the path taken by Eusapia, and, though we do not know how this woman reached the condition described by Mr. Carrington, yet the men who fostered her deception certainly helped the unfortunate creature in her development of a second personality compounded of delusion and fraud. The description of the other case of Mr. Carrington's contains a significant phrase : 'the phenomenon was of that simple order which one would naturally expect to discover in a simple undeveloped medium.' Just so : the game was only beginning, but, if the medium had developed, the split-off personality would have taken charge and limitless cheating and fraud could have been carried on by a medium who was to all seeming an honest man.

But as I showed that the causes of hysteria are to be found in conflict and repression, only taking the 'Will to Power' and 'repression of the knowledge of deceit' as particular forms applying to a few cases, so I must allow that the medium may not always be influenced by the last two

factors. The hysteric is the prey of emotions and experiences which cannot be faced unaided, and the strivings and desires that arise from the unconscious, which in one individual may find expression in social work, may find vent by a neurosis in another, or by mysticism in a third.

The desires may be of the noblest kind, and, failing to find legitimate expression, may show themselves in fantasies. I am not the first to draw attention to the psychology of Joan of Arc, and we can picture her urged by the noblest emotions to seek in a dissociated stream powers beyond the reach of consciousness; her visions were real to her, and tradition may be believed when it relates the story of her detection of King Charles disguised as one of his own courtiers. 'Be not amazed, nothing is hid from me', are the words attributed to her, and the incident well exemplifies the hypersensitivity of a dissociated stream.

I cannot picture a modern medium actuated by high motives, but am ready to admit that even in our days there may be mystics whose dissociations arose from commendable origins. Theosophy is bound up with the story of two women, Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. Besant; the former was a self-confessed deceiver, but the latter is a very different kind of woman. Brought up in strict religious surroundings, she found herself compelled to cast aside her religious beliefs and, at great personal sacrifice, take up a public attitude directly opposite to them; but her old

beliefs still lay in the unconscious, and when the opportunity arose she found relief from her conflict in a fantastic creed of the supernatural. No one who has studied her life can deny her honesty, but honesty does not make her beliefs easier of acceptance.

Before leaving the subject of mediums I must allude again to witchcraft. To those who believe in spirits, good or evil, which can take possession of us and make us do their will, and can throw about bricks and sand and furniture in our material world, there is nothing remarkable in epidemics of bewitchery, especially as the witch-finders were more fortunate than our spiritualists in having the unanimous support of the most eminent authorities of their day.

To explain the psychology of witchcraft is beyond the scope of this book, but it is not hard to conceive that when the belief in witchcraft was strong certain unfortunate people who set out to play tricks, maybe for notoriety or temporary gain, became ensnared by credulity and finding escape difficult came to believe in their own powers. Thus dissociation would be set up and on the side of the witch-finders Herd Instinct (or suggestion) and logic-tight compartments did the rest.

The fact that confessions of witchcraft were apparently common makes this explanation more probable.

For a career ending at the stake to have such a trivial origin as a desire for notoriety is in agree-

ment with the history of Sludge, whose downfall began with a desire to draw attention to himself. Call them ambitions and the desires seem less trivial, nor do I shrink from suggesting that the ' gifts ' of the water-diviner and the most financially disinterested medium, even of Mr. Stainton Moses himself, have origin in a desire to shine before one's fellows—a neurotic ' Will to Power '.

CONCLUSION

ALTHOUGH I have emphasised the part that dissociation plays in the production of beliefs and actions, yet dissociation is only a particular manifestation of the unconscious and it is the latter which is becoming the field of research as to the causes of human action.

From the evolutionary standpoint consciousness is a late development. Man sacrificed many advantages when he rose above the beast; in every mere bodily endowment he has superiors in the animal world, and as the influence of consciousness has become more and more important so the sphere of his unconscious actons has diminished.

The bird needs no foresight for the building of her nest: the impulse to build comes and must be obeyed. When migration time arrives there is no reasoned plan of going to a distant land, no scheming of routes or destinations: she just goes.

So it is with the intricate instincts of other creatures, of the wasp that builds her brood-cell, fills it with living victims, and places there an egg of whose future she can know nothing.

Seeing these things we marvel at the intelligence of the agent, but the child who ties a rag round

a stick and gives it a name uses more initiative than any other animal possesses.

Here, rather late, I will introduce McDougall's definition of an instinct :—

> 'Instinct is an innate psycho-physical tendency to pay attention to objects of a certain class, to experience emotional excitement of peculiar quality on such perceptions, and to act or have an impulse to act in a particular way with regard to that object.'

We can see that instinct suffices for the bird or insect, living almost entirely in the unconscious, to carry on the important affairs of life. Even in regard to what looks like the exercise of reason or memory we can find a parallel in the human unconscious.

The unreasonable fears and obsessions of the 'shell-shocked' soldier rest upon causes of which he is unaware, and the burnt child dreads the fire even if he were too young to remember the burning. The chicken that has once tasted a nauseous caterpillar will ever after avoid its like, but we only know that a certain emotion is called up by the sight of the caterpillar which causes the chicken to abstain ; it is an unnecessary assumption that memory, as we know it, is concerned. The obsession of the soldier who felt that he must attack his companion (see Chapter VIII) arose from the unconscious, and those animal actions which we attribute to memory can similarly have their origins apart from consciousness.

McDougall's definition of instinct applies very well to obsessions, except that the latter are not

innate but acquired ; that one definition should apply to both groups is due to them all having their origin in the unconscious.

Man, though urged by the instincts and memories of his unconscious, yet lives in his stream of consciousness and tends to believe that there is no other mind-work involved in his thoughts and actions ; but as the latest evolved function is the most variable and unstable so man's consciousness is his most uncertain function, its chief variability being in the extent to which it controls or is controlled by the unconscious.

The ideal human mind would be perfectly integrated, there would be no logic-tight compartments, all its complexes would be apparent to the consciousness, all memories available when needed, all emotions assigned to their proper cause and all instincts recognised and well-directed ; and the owner of it would find life in our world intolerable.

Remote from this ideal is the mind whose unconscious has taken the place, wholly or in part, of the stream of consciousness. Perhaps the consciousness has not developed—then we find idiocy or imbecility ; perhaps some distorted emotion from the unconscious has been the source of a dissociated stream of ideas which becomes predominant and brings its owner within the legal definition of a lunatic.

Between the extremes are the rest of mankind, the matter-of-fact man who reconciles himself to his world by a few serviceable logic-tight com-

partments, the man of temperament—artist, poet, or tramp—who counts the emotions arising from the unconscious as among the real things of life, and the other people of temperament who, finding their emotions and desires in discord with their surroundings, misdirect them and join the sufferers whom we call neurotic.

Then there are those who build up from the unconscious a fantastic world of imaginings, and, knowing nothing of the source, attribute them to outside intelligences or beings like themselves. To these belong the seers and mystics and their present-day representatives, the mediums, clairvoyants, and other believers in their own fantasies.

The counterpart of the medium is the ready believer, and each is reciprocally the victim of the other.

The medium has his dissociated stream with its hyperæsthesia and receptivity—alert to pick up the slightest hint and cast it back as a spirit revelation, and ready, moreover, to use more material trickery if needful. On the side of the believer is a logic-tight compartment containing his readiness to seize upon the feeblest evidence of the supernatural. How far he progresses into a dissociation one cannot tell, but when two Dissociates apparently bearing the stamp of honesty—one the medium and one the believer—work into each other's hands results may well be such as to defy explanation.

The study of the unconscious is legitimate, and if one chooses knowingly to tap its stores by a

method of dissociation some increase of knowledge (not about the supernatural, but about the ways of the human mind) may be expected.

But whoever hands himself over to a belief that the products of a dissociation—whether of his own consciousness or of another's—are manifestations of the Spirit World, may come to say—

> 'Had I seen, perhaps, what hand was holding mine,
> Leading me whither, I had died of fright.'

DREW THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY

Printed in Great Britain by
UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED
WOKING AND LONDON

1144 00211311 5